



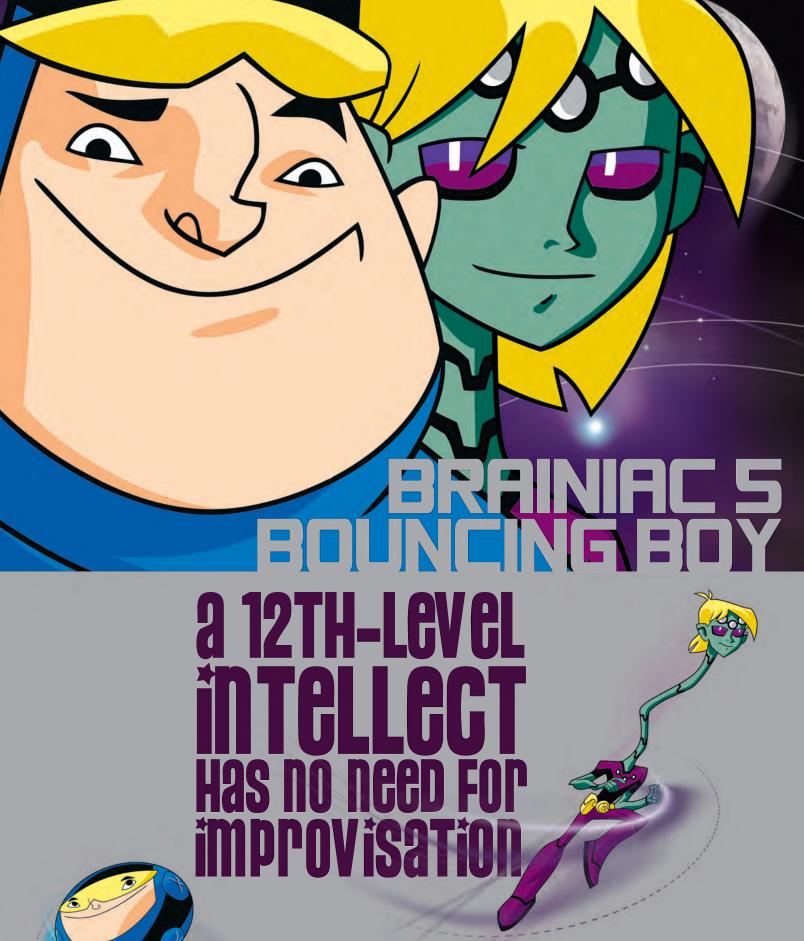








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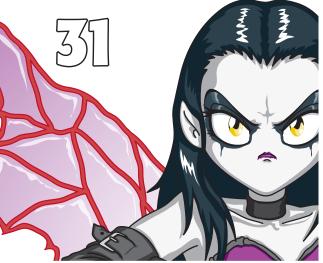
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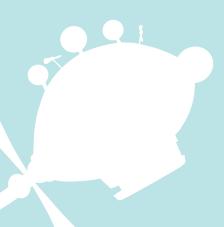




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And someone I know,
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This is the way to

The garden in the night.







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## It's time to stop and assess user generated content

believe it was the great Ferris Bueller who once said, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in awhile, you could miss it." And although you might argue with my estimation of Bueller's greatness, I don't think you can dispute how applicable the statement is to the rapidly evolving digital media landscape. It's easy to get caught up in the over-hyped technological whirlwind, and if you don't stop regularly to assess the situation, you might miss out on real opportunity.

To that end, I noted earlier this year that as kids become their own programmers, picking and choosing what will get air time on their portable players and computer screens, sooner or later, they'll want to become part of the show. Well, guess what? As our Staff Writer Gary Rusak outlines so well in "Young Frankensteins" (page 108) it's happening right now.

It's not just the vaunted 18 to 34 crowd that's getting into mashing together clips of their favorite TV shows and songs and slapping the resulting creations up on YouTube. Kids are making their own user generated content, too. Moreover, as the story points out, a few savvy broadcasters have gotten into the game early to help the kids out. Canada's Teletoon, for instance, has fielded close to 300,000 user generated submissions featuring its Zimmer Twins characters, where kids had the opportunity to direct the endings of a series of shorts. The best of the field, 120 in total, have been airing as interstitials on the net for the past few months.

Like Digital Outlook MD Jens Bachem, I think an initiative such as Teletoon's is the smartest way to deal with the copyright infringement issues that arise from typical user generated content. Instead of fighting the repurposing of IP, why not encourage it? Give kids the on-line tools and access to digital assets they need to create better quality UGC that doesn't diminish the brand. If IP owners don't stop and engage now, they might just miss the chance to exert positive control over how their properties get manipulated by fans on-line. No one wants to pay to keep a stable of lawyers busy issuing cease and desist orders 24/7.

Switching gears, I'd like to welcome a new addition to the editorial staff. Kate Calder joins *KidScreen* as our new Senior Writer. She'll be handling the Marketing, Retail and People sections for starters, so please feel free to introduce yourself (kcalder@brunico.com; 416-408-2300 x334), and send leads relevant to her beats.

I'll be on the road for three weeks this month, traveling to Brand Licensing, MIPCOM Jr, MIPCOM and the Fall Toy Show. Hopefully, I'll get the chance to catch up with a number of you fellow globetrotters.

Cheers, Lana



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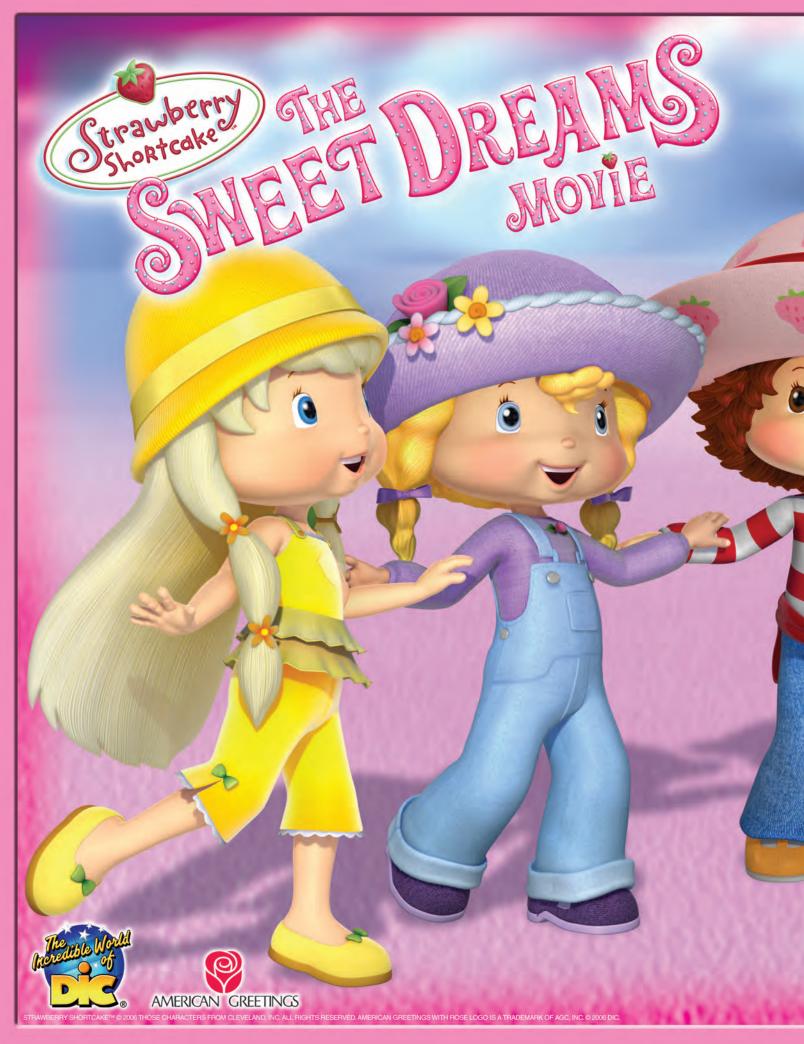


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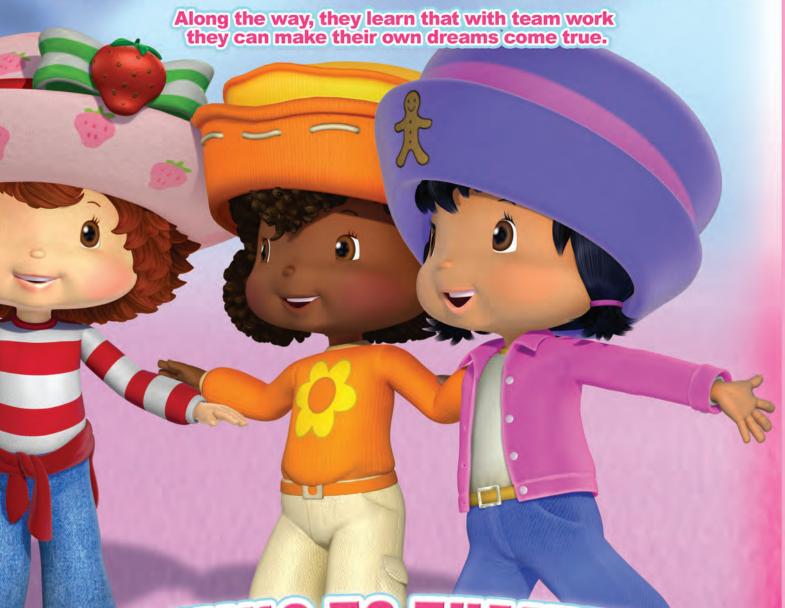






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pitch season kicks into high gear for all industry sectors, we've had a number of requests from readers lately for information and research on companies, products, trends and properties. Those requests prompt me to send out a reminder of our on-line issue archives, complete with keyword search, which you can find online at www.kidscreen.com. Trying to remember the name of the property that a potential partner launched in 2002? Looking for analysis of licensing opportunities in Japan? Type in your keywords and enjoy access to almost 10 years worth of KidScreen articles, features and reports. *Very bandy*.

As of press time, which according to my ticker clock is 142 days from the event, we've seen a huge wave of activity in registration for this year's KidScreen Summit with more than 300 top industry execs already committing their participation. With that momentum and excitement, it's looking like it will be another banner year! As always, our early bird pricing offers you a chance to enjoy a registration discount for signing up early – please note that our US\$995 rate currently in effect expires on October 27, 2006. Go on-line to register at www.kidscreensummit.com or call *Sharlene* at 416-408-2300 ext. 313.

In the evaluations received on last year's event, one issue presented itself repeatedly; to address that issue, we are pleased to share with you a key change in format for the 2007 KidScreen Summit. **KidScreen Summit 2007 will be 3 full days instead of 2!** 

By popular demand, we're opening the Summit on Wednesday morning (February 7/07) and reprogramming the content across 3 days instead of 2 to help delegates accommodate more meetings and networking without having to skip valuable programmed sessions and activities. Stay tuned for full agenda details.

The *KidScreen* team will be racking up lots of frequent flyer miles as we hit the road for numerous events this month. Lana, Myles and I will be at Brand Licensing in London; Lana, conference producer Meredith Jordan, the sales team and I will be at MIPCOM Jr and MIPCOM; Lana will be in New York for the American International Fall Toy Show; and who knows where else we might pop up! We look forward to seeing many of you out and about this month.

We love getting feedback and suggestions from readers about information in the current issue and ideas for future issues and events, so please do feel free to drop a line anytime to me at dmacneil@brunico.com.

Enjoy the issue!

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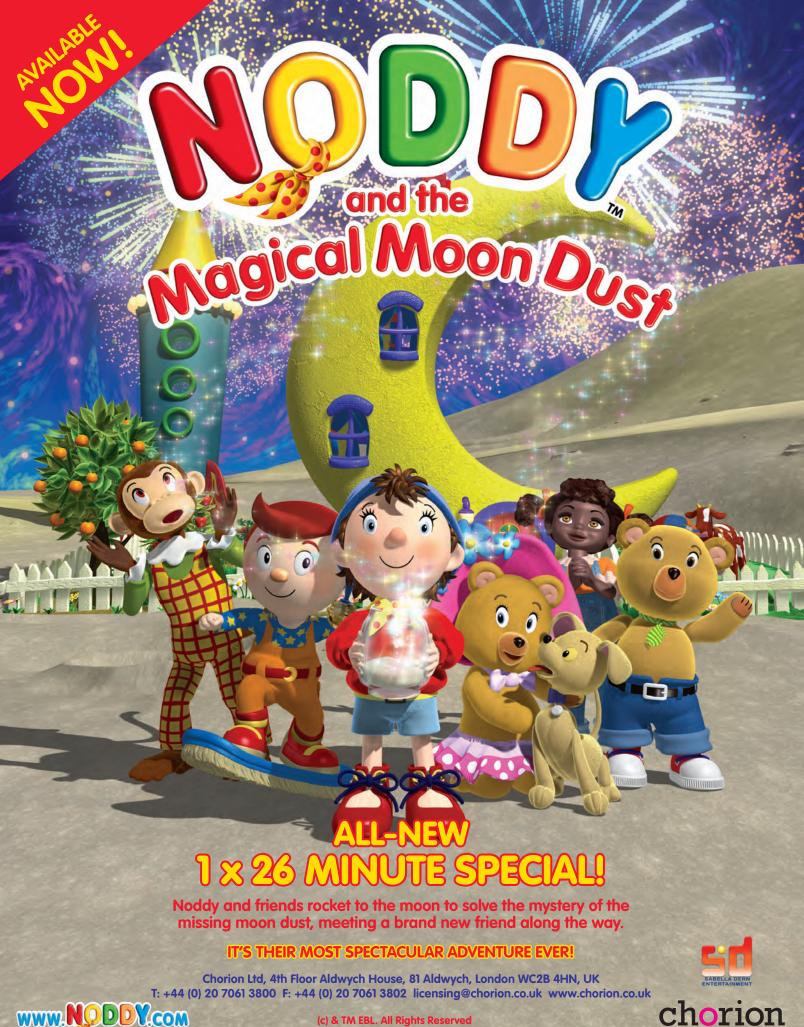
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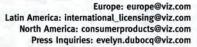
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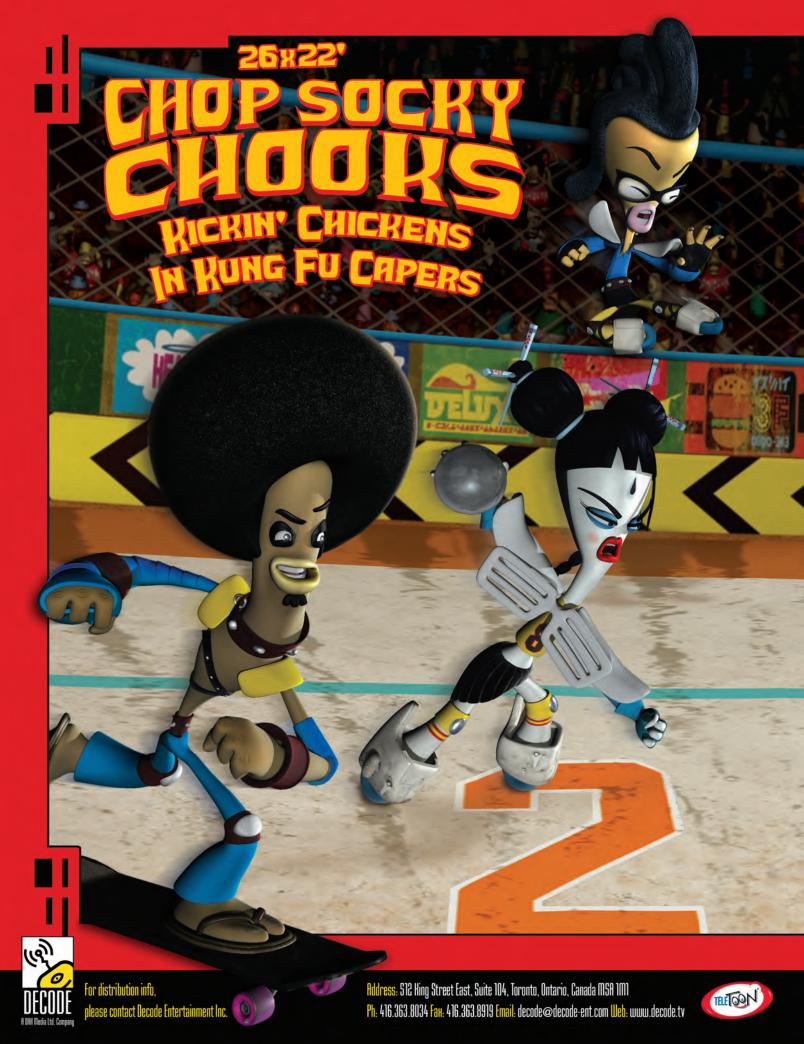


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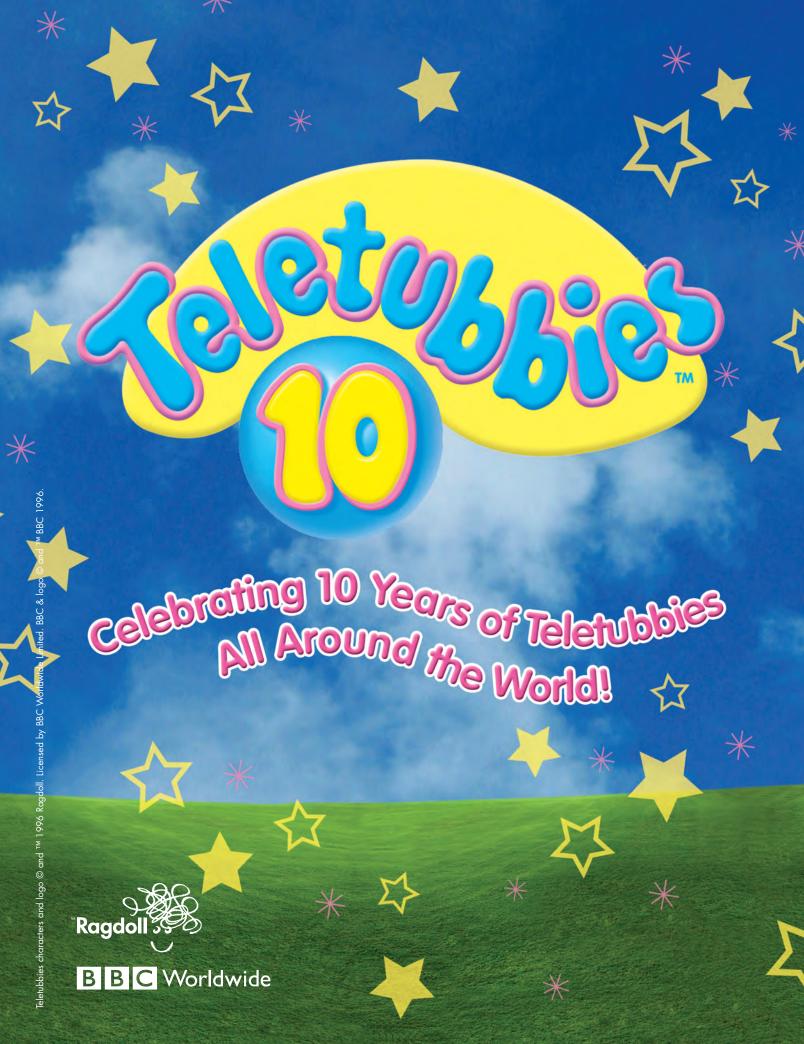




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# GENIE THE HOUSE



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Scary Fairies will help launch KOL's brand-new free internet hub this month



# KOL MOVES OUT FROM UNDER AOL'S ROOF

by gary rusak

here comes a time in every life when one must move out of the family home. So it is with KOL, the subsidiary of Dulles, Virgina-based AOL.

In a move that will reshape the way that one of the biggest on-line players in the kidspace does business, KOL is moving out from under the AOL banner, shedding its subscription-based service model to re-launch as a standalone free website (kol.com) this month.

And a few Scary Fairies will help with the transition. KOL just purchased the property that features hipster fairies with attitude from British design company Groovy after months of

negotiation. The creatures will be the multi-platform face of the new venture that will hopefully keep KOL's current three-million-plus users and attract more.

"It's like a bus," says AOL senior VP Malcolm Bird describing his busy summer that also included the creation of a Saturday morning TV block with partners DIC and CBS. "It all comes along at once."

The driver of the bus in this case is the complete overhaul of the KOL business model in tandem with that of its former host AOL, which is also moving to an ad-supported model in the coming months. So KOL is opening up the wholly redesigned site to all, including international visitors for the first time.

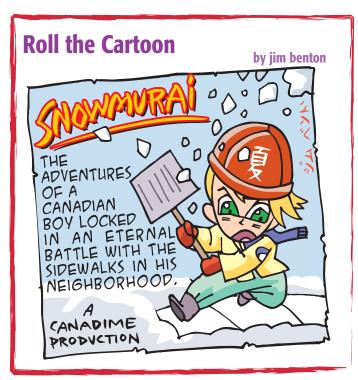
Of course, without the revenue generated from the US\$9.95 monthly subscription fee, KOL will have to entertain additional offers from advertisers to sustain it.

"We always had a very guarded approach towards having advertising when we were client-based," Bird says. "Now we are moving to an advertising-supported model which will mean banner ads, rich media and strategic marketing alliances."

But, where do the fairies fit in? Bird says the property is a natural to help launch the new venture because it's unique and while targeting kids ages eight to 14, it should appeal to all demographics. It was a chance encounter at 2005's Licensing Show in New York that he points to as the Eureka! moment.

"It literally stopped me in my tracks," he says, adding that the property is far smarter and sleeker than the current crop of elfenfolk on the market. "These are no Mickey Mouse fairies," Bird says.

KOL has high hopes for its new property and will unveil it to the market at MIPCOM with plans to develop a 2-D animated 26 x 11 minute series with domestic and international TV syndication rights and licensing and merchandising deals pretty much in place. Bird and creator Martin Butler will be in the driver's seat and inform the creative process along the way.



Japan's anime houses are looking outside their border for copro partners, page 93



## **Corus fully integrates Nelvana**

ne of Canada's biggest entertainment companies is radically restructuring in order to streamline its production and broadcast arms.

Toronto. Canada-based Corus Entertainment announced its re-organization plans last month. The new outfit will integrate animation house Nelvana Studios, which the company purchased in 2000, into its television division. Newly created Nelvana Enterprises will focus on leveraging Corus' intellectual property internationally, including The Fairly Odd Parents, Ruby Gloom, Franklin and Babar.

In conjunction with the move, Corus also announced the amalgamation of its Movie Central, W Network, CMT and Scream broadcast channels as well as the consolidation of Movie Central's operations into Corus' Toronto head office.

Furthermore, Nelvana's L.A. and U.K. offices are being shut down and all North American operations will be run from the Toronto office, with the existing Paris office overseeing all Euro activity. The closures will result in reduction of 15 staff members.

"We thought if we could create those two important content hubs that it would help us in the future, as it goes to repurposing content against multiple platforms," Paul Robertson, president of Corus Television, explains.



Scott Dyer, now executive VP and GM of kids for Corus, says the corporate reorganization will have no effect on Nelvana production plans made prior to the move.

"Our intent is to produce at roughly the same level, which means about 100 to 150 episodes a year, and to continue to produce for

> the key Canadian broadcasters," says Dyer. "For the production community this doesn't change the number of independent producers we work with."

> On the broadcast side, Corus owns Canada's top kidnet YTV, preschool-focused Treehouse and 50% of 24/7 kidsnet Teletoon. Dyer is confident the company will be able to serve both the broadcast arm and production arm more efficiently under the new regime. "It gives us a broader single focus," Dyer says, adding the change will make the interaction between the broadcast and production sides seamless.

> Former Nelvana executive VP of business development Doug Murphy has been named president of the newly dubbed Nelvana Enterprises, and is focused on sussing out international TV and licensing market prospects for Corus properties.

> "Specifically we will be the international partner for the Corus team and look to distribute the content for our broadcast partners, and work to do home video, master toy and consumer product franchise deals where applicable," says Murphy. Additionally, NE is scouting out third-party content to distribute internationally. GR

### **Rock-a-bye Ramones?**

ullabies have moved far beyond Brahms thanks to Silver Lake, California-based CMH Records. Appealing to the sensibilities of Gen-X parents, the company began repurposing the songs of the demo's favoured bands for its offspring. The tunes of Radiohead, Metallica, Tool and Coldplay were the first to be interpreted for infant ears in the company's Rockabye Baby! series, launched this past August. The brainchild of Lisa Roth, VP of the label, the concept was to bring



an edgier sound to a form that is often overrun with syrupy sentiment. "It's got a little sense of humor, and a sense of irony," says Roth. She describes the sound as evoking gnomes in a tree playing popular favorites, and is pleased with how producer Michael Armstrong adapted the material. The public's response seems to bear her out, and the company has plans to release 17 more titles for the series by March 2007 with another dozen to follow. VP of sales Ed Maxin predicts the company will move 50,000 units of the initial 10 titles with a majority of the sales being conducted through the website (babyrockrecords. com), which averages 15,000 hits each day.

Who's up next to lull the wee ones to sleep? Indie rock gods The Ramones and The Pixies, with Nine Inch Nails and Green Day to follow. Huh.



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# Team Baby lands a fan in Michael Eisner

is no secret that university and professional sports teams hold a particular fascination for their fans in the U.S. In fact, according to LIMA's 2006 *Licensing Industry Survey*, sports and collegiate licenses generated approximately US\$1 billion in royalty revenues from related merchandise sold last year.

And Houston, Texas-based entrepreneur Greg Scheinman bet those loyal fans would provide a market for a kids DVD series that aims to instil team pride before kids are even old enough to verbalize it. Using real infants to teach those watching at home the fight songs of their parents' favourite team, the DVDs caught the attention of ex-Disney CEO Michael Eisner earlier this year, and Team Baby Entertainment has been on the expansion trail since.

Scheinman launched the company in January 2005 and shipped the first 35-minute DVDs to various retail outlets across the U.S. that April. Team Baby's initial roll out included 20 DVDs such as *Baby Gator* for University of Florida devotees and *Baby Badger* for University of Wisconsin fans. Although as a private company Team Baby does not release any sales figures, Scheinman says unit sales exceeded expectations.

"It's safe to say initial sales have been larger than the crowd at the big house for a Michigan vs. Notre Dame game," he says. For non-college football fans that translates to more than 100,000.

Scheinman ended up selling his interest in the company in June to Eisner's private investment firm The Tomante Company (the terms of the deal were not publicly released). While retaining his position as CEO of Team Baby, Scheinman knew that the new ownership would give the company favorable field position.

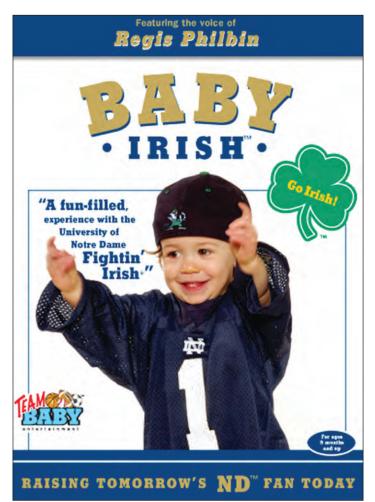
"I'm thrilled that it struck a chord with him," he says of Eisner. "With his assets and resources and contacts and his ability, it will help me grow this company faster and ideally smarter than I could have on my own."

After years in the TV and film business in New York and LA, Scheinman found this hole in the DVD market while searching in vain for a way to pass on his love of his alma mater's team the Michigan Wolverines to his infant son.

"I was watching a lot of the DVDs he was being exposed to and none of them were sports-related," he says.

This seed of an idea led to negotiations with the University of Texas Longhorns to incorporate the team, its logos, colors and theme song, into the first preschool-targeted DVD. The production took cues from other popular baby DVDs such as Baby Einstein and emphasized the values of teamwork, basic mathematics, shapes and colors. Subsequent videos in the series have followed the format.

Eisner's involvement has seriously stepped up the company's output. In July, Team Baby announced deals with NASCAR, Major League Baseball and the National Basketball Association. The strategy is to roll out one NASCAR national release on November 1 and then follow with



Tapping into an audience of adult fans who want to pass their alma mater love on to their toddlers is the name of the game for Team Baby

products based on popular race car drivers. Also in November, Team Baby is expecting to release a Major League Baseball national division DVD featuring all 30 teams to be followed by specific team releases such as *Baby Yankees* and *Baby Dodgers*.

On top of the already hectic production slate, consumers can expect to see a couple of NBA titles out before Christmas. And Scheinman is plotting his next move, with an eye to securing the licenses for National Hockey League franchises and, perhaps, professional international soccer teams down the road.

Scheinman says he's thrilled to bring his passion to the newest generation, especially at a time when professional sports is suffering from a spate of bad publicity.

"A product like this is raising the next generation of fans and doing it in the most positive manner," he says. **GR** 



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### Cranium grand poo-bah Tait's manic Martha mastery

Cranium co-founder and grand poo-bah Richard Tait has a niggling obsession right now: cupcakes. But before cupcakes, it was banana bread and before that vanilla ice cream. And nachos? They're an ongoing challenge, of course. In fact Tait's made a second career of trying to master one pursuit at a time with the goal of perfecting at least 50 in his lifetime. When he's not busy with the pursuits or shepherding the ever-expanding Cranium, he's also something of an amateur biographer, phew.

So back to the banana bread. Last year he tried out more than 20 recipes in search of the perfect loaf. If you think it's a reasonably straightforward task, he says, you haven't considered all the variations. Do you like walnuts or not? How about soggy in the middle? Do you like it to taste good toasted? The vanilla ice cream involved shaving real vanilla beans, scouting out goose eggs and visiting the local market regularly to find the best fresh cream. And he may never reach nacho nirvana. Testing new combos has become a family ritual on Sunday nights. He has cherished attempting to achieve the perfect balance of chips, cheese, onions, and homemade salsa and guacamole once a week for the last two years.

In all cases there's much analysis and testing involved using a highly critical focus group—Tait's wife, his seven-year-old twin daughters and his two-year-old son.

"This year is going to be cupcakes," Tait, a self-described Peter Pan, says. He's planning a New Year's party in which he'll roll out the decorative confections. His goal is to get really good at it by the beginning of December so he's got the perfect cupcakes nailed by New Year's Eve.

"It's about mastery and craft. It usually revolves around a passionate pursuit and mastery of something that we all share and consume as a family," Tait explains.

Part of the perfecting process involves another of his great obsessions, documenting and recording the people and events around him. To put this pastime in perspective, Tait has about 1,500 GB of storage on his computer hard drive, with roughly 600 GB devoted solely to digital photographs. Tait says he tries not to be the guy with the camera, but he points out that it's the only way he can refine his given pursuit. "You have to keep track of what's working and what's not," he says.

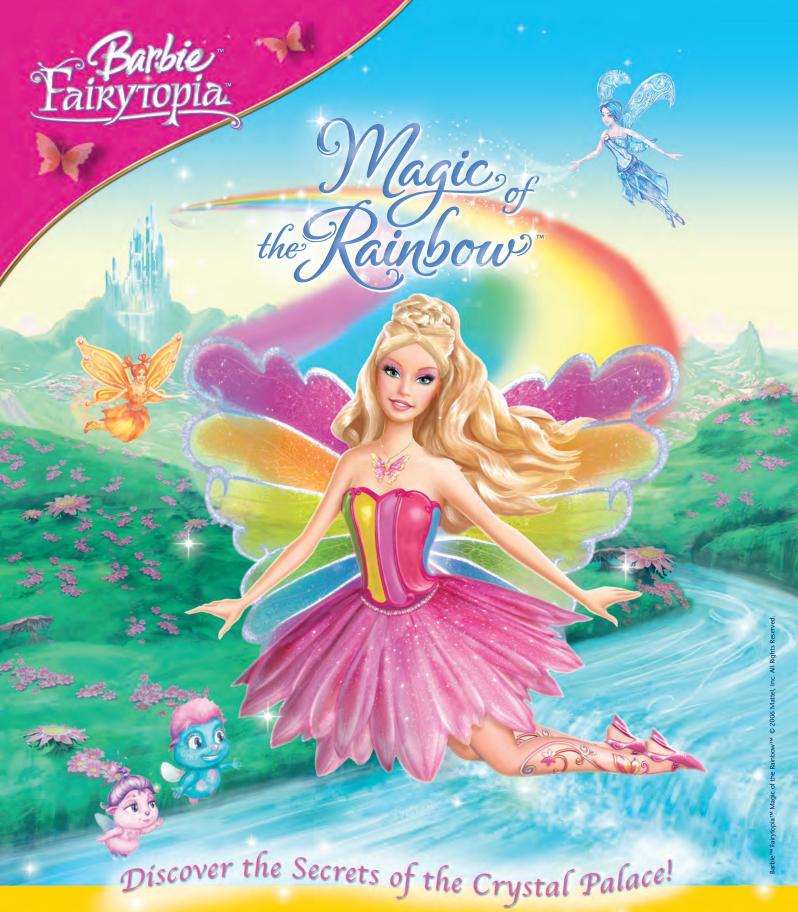
Tait's enthusiastic videotaping and photography also includes capturing touchstone moments in his family's life. Recently, he filmed himself and his mother on their shared birthday returning to the house in Scotland in which he was born. Naturally, creating biographies based on these special life experiences is part of his repertoire.



The moments he captures aren't all emotional, however. For example, one of his latest video quests is to find footage of the world's best laughing baby. And he and his girls are working on editing a stop-motion animated home movie they created together, starring some mini-stuffed animals frolicking atop a frozen pond in the San Francisco Arboretum.

"I love two scales of play. One is larger-than-life play and the other is enjoying simple moments that I like to capture with me and the kids," he says.

Tait has also been hard at play at Cranium headquarters with partner and co-founder Whit Alexander. A party in a box is how he describes the company's new pop culture trivia game, Pop 5, which this summer begat Pop 5 Live, an interactive on-line version. Tait's also excited about the company's expansion into the toy realm. A first for the company, 13 SKUs rolled out this year, including the Mega Mask kit with interchangeable components, and Super Fort, a life-size magnetic construction set designed just for kids. **KC** 



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# JumpTV leaps into kids content

oronto, Canada-based JumpTV is hoping to revamp its internet broadcast business to further tap into the market for multi-lingual television across the globe. And it's looking for kids content to amp up its service.

The concept is to stream live non-linear feeds to what chairman and CEO G. Scott Paterson calls the "Diaspora of immigrants" around the world who desire to watch programming in their mother tongue but don't have access to it. The site jumptv.com launched five years ago, but is currently gearing up for a re-launch this month that will augment the service with increased content, as well as VOD and pay-per-view capabilities.

So far, the publicly traded company has signed 212 channel agreements in 65 different countries. All of the deals include a clause prohibiting transmission of the broadcasts in the country of origin. The site offers channels originating anywhere from Albania to Venezuela and points in between.

In conjunction with the October launch of JumpTV 3.0, the company has acquired



Toronto, Canada-based JumpTV 3.0 launches this month

the broadcast rights for the Portugueselanguage version of London-based HIT Entertainment's *Bob the Builder* and four shows from Toronto's Cookie Jar Entertainment including *Paddington Bear* and *Mona the Vampire*. Children's programming will play a big part in JumpTV's future, Paterson says, because families often want to sustain their traditional language at home and what better way than through the simple and straightforward communication in animated kids shows.

"People who want to learn a language often do it by watching children's programming," he says. "The simple words, slow speaking, it really works." The goal right now is to test the market with the initial kids lineup and then search out more content from there.

In its last quarterly report, the company had 18,000 subscribers throughout 80 countries. The number may be deceptively low as all marketing and promotional plans have been on hold until the launch of the new version.

A monthly subscription costs US\$9.95 for one channel with packages available for US\$20, however, prices for the new version including VOD and pay-per-view have not yet been set. *GR* 



# KidScreen Poll Patrol

Pending advertising regulations in the U.K. are poised to reduce the number of kids TV programs produced in the region. So we asked our website visitors what impact they believe a weaker U.K. production industry would have on the international kids market.

None: 4.62% Some: 26.15%

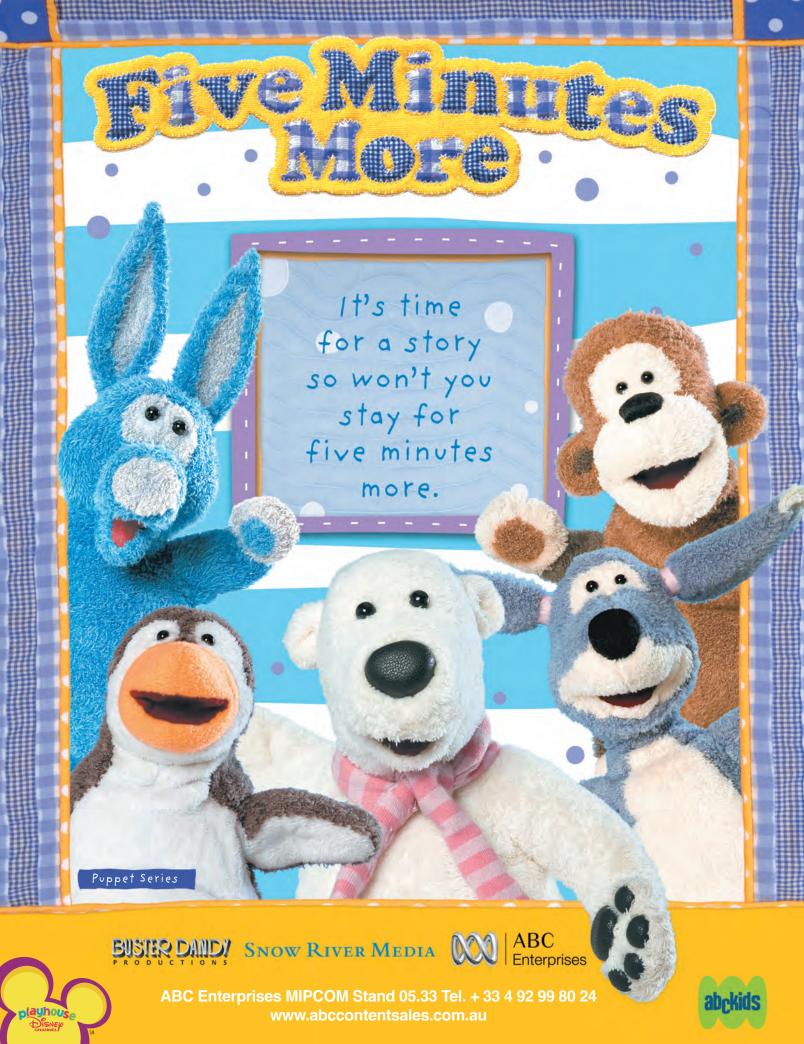
Very little: 15.38% Significant: 53.85%

Despite the uncertainty in the U.K. right now, broadcasters are conducting business as usual and readying their fall schedules. See p. 115 for more details

# MGA scoops up Little Tikes

Van Nuys, California-based MGA Entertainment is getting into the preschool toy market with its acquisition of Little Tikes. Well-known for its bright Cozy Car Coupe, which has sold more than six million units since its creation, the kids toy and furniture manufacturer brought in about US\$250 million in revenue for previous owner Newell Rubbermaid in 2005.

"Preschool is the fastest growing segment of the toy business. We will take this brand to new levels with product innovation and strategic marketing," says MGA CEO Isaac Larian. He also plans on keeping manufacturing and warehousing in Hudson, Ohio, but doesn't know at this point whether there will be layoffs. MGA didn't disclose the amount of the buyout, but a released statement from Newell Rubbermaid reveals it expects to record a net gain of between US\$15 million and US\$25 million in Q4 related to the transaction. **KC** 





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by gary rusak

# Oww!-I

A lot can happen to an owl in 60 seconds.

The Germany-based TV-Loonland and Parisian Studio Hari's co-pro *The Owl* takes its cue from Looney Tunes' Wile E. Coyote. The 52 x one minute CGl dialogue-free series shows its wide-eyed title character enduring an unending string of hilarious mishaps.

In a sleek and vibrant digital environment, each episode opens with the bird minding his own business on his perch. In the pilot ep, the pink protagonist eyes a colorful caterpillar climbing up said tree. The owl coyly watches the furry intruder before attempting to eat it, only to lose the ensuing struggle—and an ear. Things go from bad to worse when a section of the tree comes loose and flattens the feathered creature like a pancake. The physical humor is aiming to strike the funny bone of a broad demo, including core kids and their parents.

TV-L and Hari are betting the one-minute format makes *The Owl* ideal for cross-platform distribution, but the pair will also have traditional terrestrial broadcasters in its crosshairs at MIPCOM.

The producers are fielding early interest from broadcasters in Italy and South Africa, but first want to nail down a French broadcaster in order to fully secure the US\$509,000 budget for the entire series. If all goes according to plan, the one minute eps should be delivered by June 2007.

## **Intergalactic instant messenger**

When a message has to be delivered with lightning speed to the far corners of the galaxy, the name Rocket Boy should come to mind.

The concept for *Rocket Boy and Toro* came from South Koreabased prodco Imagestone and was acquired by U.K. post-production house The Village before eventually finding a home with



London's Cosgrove Hall, which has put the 52 x 11 minute 2-D animated series into development.

The young teen rocket-headed hero and his sheep sidekick Toro are the flat-out fastest forces in the galaxy that lies 1,000-million light years from earth. But, with great speed comes great responsibility. Rocket Boy along with his friends—wiseman Grandpa Sat, possible girlfriend Chrystella, and Vector, a free-spirited inventor—must do battle with the evil Dr. Square and his not-so-loyal sidekick Trash.

In one episode entitled "Baby Blues", Trash deposits a fake baby equipped with a tracking device on Chrystella's doorstep. Rocket Boy and Chrystella take to parenting the faux infant before a colli-



sion between faithful Toro and the "baby" reveals the evil plot. In the end, Dr. Square's dreams of capturing the quick courier are foiled, yet again.

The US\$6-million action-comedy series is targeting the five to eight set and should be ready by the middle of 2008. The BBC is already onboard, but Cosgrove also has its eyes on foreign markets and is actively seeking out international broadcast deals.

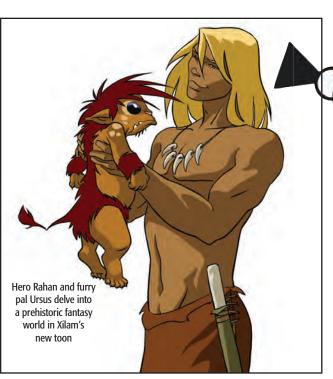
# **Prehistoric fantasy unbound**

Based on a famous French comic books published throughout the 1970s, *Rahan* from Paris-based Xilam is an action-adventure fantasy series that tells the tale of a courageous prehistoric teenage warrior who desires to bring peace to a fractured land.

Budgeted at US\$9.1 million, Xilam has deals with France 3 and Rai in Italy and is in serious discussions with a German broadcaster for the first 26 half hours. The target delivery date is the beginning of 2008.

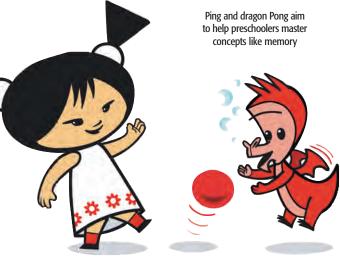
# **Girl and fire-breathing friend**

*Ping and Pong* is Novel Entertainment's new 26 x 11-minute preschool series starring four-year-old Ping and her fire-breathing best bud Pong. Traditional 2-D animated sequences are set against CGI backgrounds to showcase the grandeur of the island setting. Ping lives with her mother and grandfather and is often led into adventure by her trusty red ball, Bounce. The series aims to use simple storytelling to explore age-appropriate concepts.



Aimed at boys seven to 12 years old, the 2-D animated show will be spiced up with some CGI effects. Featuring wizards, sorceresses, and ancient Queens, Xilam's hoping to capitalize on the continued popularity of the fantasy genre as well as the original comic book's established fan base.

In the pilot episode, the title character is being followed by a hairy creature that steals his supplies. Upon being captured, the creature—Ursus—says he is really the spirit of a cave bear trapped inside a ridiculous-looking furry figure. Ursus comes off as quite the annoying chatterbox at first, but ends up endearing himself to Rahan. The newly matched odd couple then meets up with Thetya, a blind Neanderthal woman who has amazing powers and no need for their protection. In fact, she rescues Rahan when the chief of a rival clan attempts to steal his cherished ivory cutlass.



In the ep entitled "Remember," Ping is playing on the beach with her friend when a dolphin finds a bottle in the sea. She opens the bottle to find a song, a picture of a young girl and a stone from the Island of Many Pebbles. After discussing the items with her friends, Ping decides to place three of her own things in a bottle and cast it into the sea. Throughout the episode the concept of memory and identity are investigated with a child's sensibility.

U.K.-based Novel's been in discussions with possible partners, but no deals have been inked as of yet to help secure the US\$3 million budget. Armed with a short trailer, Novel will be shopping *Ping and Pong* around Cannes with the aim of landing enough presales to start production. If all goes well, eps could be ready by Fall 2007.

# **Hip-hop hippo**

The director of the Disney animated-classic *The Lion King* has turned his attention to TV with the new Flash animated series *The Adventures* of *Hippo-T Hopp*.

Famed director Rob Minkoff and his L.A.-based Cinemation production company hatched the concept, and Germany-based RDF Television has partnered up to produce the  $52 \times 11$ -minute series.

"UpNext" continued on page 50



## New Children's: 26 x 15 minutes

Initial Productions (an Endemol Company) in association with the Northern Ireland Film Board MIPCOM Stand R38.01 www.granadamedia.com/international





# **BET bolsters animation arm**

ashington D.C.-based BET Networks has linked up with industry stalwart Film Roman in its first effort to create toons for the domestic kids market.

BET Network, a division of Viacom, is the number-one U.S. broadcaster focusing on providing entertainment that caters specifically to the nation's African-American community. It curently has carriage in 81 million households and has four branded channels and a supporting website.

In August, it announced a deal with the IDT-owned studio behind *The Simpsons* and *King of the Hill*. The deal will see the network bolster its animation division and fully integrate animated fare into its programming slate. The three-year non-exclusive agreement between the companies allows for a number of co-productions, including animated specials slated to air on the net and then go to the DTV market.

"This is our first venture into children's animation programming," says Denys Cowan, BET senior VP of animation. "Our audience has a huge appetite for animation." He points to the success of Boondocks and Bebe's Kids as proof positive that net's audience is animated-inclined.



War Dog resulted from the BET-Film Roman deal

It's early days yet to talk specifics, but the network is interested in exploring fantasy and science fiction genres that will be in keeping with the network's African American-themed focus. And while a dedicated children's block on BET is not in the cards, the copro arrangement should bump up the presence of animated kids fare on the net.

"Our major audience is the 18 to 34 demographic, but we know that a lot of kids are watching BET, so it is important for us to reach out to them," says Cowan.

The majority of the programming will roll out in 2007, with some animated shorts airing by the end of 2006.

In addition to the Film Roman deal, BET has also signed on for an animated prime-time mini series *Hannibal the Conqueror* with actor Vin Diesel and U.S.-based One Race Productions. The series focuses on the famous Carthaginian's childhood and will be cross-promoted via BET's broadcast channels before it bows in the spring.

"It is going to be primetime and actionoriented, but not necessarily violent," says Cowan, adding the show will skew towards an older audience but still be appropriate for younger viewers because of its father and son theme.

In conjunction with the two major animation announcement's BET is re-uniting Cowan and Milestone Media co-founder Dwayne McDuffie, who first worked together to create Static Shock, the WB's Saturday morning animated children's block that aired between 1999 and 2004. The pair is also in the early stages of developing a action-adventure animated series that skews to the youth market entitled *War Dog* that will likely launch on the net in the Fall of 2007. *GR* 

# Canadian pubcaster expands global sales efforts

Canadian pubcaster CBC is amping up the remit of its international sales and distribution division by looking beyond Canadian productions to fill its slate.

For more than 30 years the internal CBC office has been selling Canadian productions across the world, garnering a reputation for delivering quality goods. But there is a new mandate to pick up international projects to create an additional revenue stream to feed into homegrown productions.

"We are trying to get our name out there and rebrand ourselves, so people know that we are CBC International Sales," says Robert Evans, manager of marketing and operations. "We are definitely open to international projects now."

The division is looking to acquire at least two new series to distribute at international markets. And it's entertaining pitches from all sectors of the kids programming space. The goal is to make sure the acquisitions contribute to the construction of a mixed but balanced portfolio.

"We are looking to keep our catalogue varied and not just have six preschool shows that compete with each other," sales manager Kirsten Hurd says.

The new plan also involves the team traveling further a field to score program sales. Expect to see a CBC International Sales Division booth on the show floor at NATPE '07 in Las Vegas for the first time. "I would hope that we can also make it to Australia, and there are lots of kids channels in Asia and the Middle East too," Hurd adds.

In the meantime, the team will also be traveling to Cannes with a stable of Canadian-produced fare. With a keen eye on European markets, CBC International will be shopping around the 9 x 30-minute animated series *The Secret World of Og*, based on Pierre Berton's classic children's book, the 52 x 11-minute preschool series *Wilbur* (a co-production with Mercury Filmworks, Chilco Productions, EKA Distribution, CBC and Discovery Channel.), and *Yam Roll*, a 39 x 11/39 x 3 animated series about a taxi driver in a land of sushi. *GR* 

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# South Korean net gets off the ground

by gary rusak

espite a perceived dip in the worldwide broadcaster appetite for anime (see "Made in Japan", p. 93 for more details), in South Korea the competition for young fans is fierce. With a seemingly unquenchable thirst for animated fare, a bevy of networks are looking to specialize and carve out their own demo within the broader sphere.

Animax Korea, a joint venture between Sony Pictures Television International and Korea Digital Satellite Broadcasting (KDSB), launched in April 2006 and airs 24/7 exclusively on KDSB's platform SkyLife. Approximately 1.9 million subscribers dole out around US\$20 a month each to receive the service. Its mandate is to showcase local and Japanproduced anime programming, and has been hailed as the largest exclusively anime network in the world.

Sang-Im Kim, director of programming and marketing for the network, says the net is looking to build upon its success with a slightly older demo than its competition.

"We are targeting youth and young adults," she says, "unlike most of the other local animation channels [that] are targeting just kids."

Animax Korea's main competition is from 24-hour cartoon nets including Tooniverse, Champ and Ani-one. The latter is Animax's biggest rival, and is currently besting the net in the ratings race.

Currently, the broadcaster is happy with the success of a number of its programs including the locally produced Black Rubber Shoes, a historical look at South Korea in the 1930s, and Bern and Blood, a 50-episode drama that tells the story of a girl whose destiny lies in fighting a gang of monsters.

However, looking forward to its second year of operation, Kim says the net will bolster its three main programming blocks that include an early morning kids block, a prime block in the afternoon for teens and a pre-



Bern and Blood is one of South Korea's 24/7 anime net Animax's most popular programs

mium block in the evening that skews older towards youth and young adult.

To this end, the net has purchased the Japanese hit Honey & Clover, a romantic look at collegiate life; well-known manga property Paradise Kiss, about a teenage girl's unbelievable adventure in the world of high fashion; and Fate/Stay Night, a 24-ep fantasy series. And to keep momentum going, Kim is on the lookout for titles for next year, including international properties. Specifically for the morning kid's block, the net has purchased a handful of local animated series but will also be keeping an eye out for European and American products to import.

With the latest ratings showing a 0.2 for Animax in August, Kim knows that the network has a ways to go to maximize its viewership. Currently, the ratings show Animax fluctuating between 10th and 15th rank out of the 80 channels on the platform. At first glance, this would seem to be a tenable situation, but Kim is hoping that in 2007 Animax will overtake Ani-One and become the nation's number one 24/7 animation network.

"We will continue to concentrate on youth," she says. "We believe there is a (niche) in the youth market. We also hope that young adults who read comics will come to our channel to watch animation."



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Siblings Sam

and Molly ask viewers "Are

we there yet?"

### "UpNext" continued from page 44

The concept revolves around a highly successful hip hop star, Hippo-T Hopp and chronicles his climb to international stardom and celebrity, focusing on his battle with his arch nemesis Ton Def, a less successful rapping toad.

In one episode, the rapping hippo and his posse perform in the West Indies and discover a map to the Lost Treasure of Bling Bling. Unfortunatly, rival Ton Def finds the map too and beats our hero to the bounty. But, little does Ton Def know that the treasure is guarded by stone statues that come to life. The statues, like just about everyone else, prefer Hippo-T Hopp's music and let him grab the sought-after bling.

Targeted at boys and girls six to 12 years old, the series will rely on the heavy use of original



RDF gets into kids production with blingedout rap master Hippo-T Hopp

music and sly pop culture references in an attempt to lure this savvy audience. Budgeted at US\$10-million for the entire series, producers are looking to woo major international broadcasters as well as hatch a full multi-media and merchandising program. The tales of the rapping hippo should be delivered by spring 2008.

### What about now?

Canadian children's TV specialists Sinking Ship Productions has partnered up with fellow Canadian Cellar Door Productions and Washington, D.C.-based National Geographic Kids' Entertainment to produce a global adventure show aimed at preschoolers ages three to six.

> Are We There Yet? is a title that will ring familiar to any parent who has ever taken a road trip with their kids, and this show will go one better than the car trip and take viewers on global adventures. Focusing on seven-year-old Molly and her five-year-old brother Sam, the live-action reality-based 39 x 7-minute show will feature a different exotic locale every third episode. In the first three eps, Molly and Sam are in Mexico where their first order of business is to interact with sea cows and dolphins. After that they learn how to play an ancient Mayan sport, and in the final episode shot in the Central American country they attend a street festival and gleefully destroy a piñata.

The show will stress the values of inclusiveness and cultural awareness and producers have already struck a deal with Canadian kids net Treehouse TV. However, international distributor Nat Geo is not stopping there and believes the nature of the show makes it a good candidate for international sales. The series is budgeted at US\$1.7 mllion and is expected to bow

in March 2007 . 🐧





ReelKids breaks broadband ground with new VOD service

he first broadband network to marry DVD quality with point and click streaming technology is launching a kid's portal and is looking for content to stock its catalogue.

Seattle-based ReelTime Rentals will initially offer its kid's programming through its main portal reeltime.com, but in the coming months its branching out with a kids-specific site, ReelKids TV.

"The market is exploding especially for young adults," says Beverly Zaslow, VP of acquisitions and business development, adding that it's second nature for the younger generation to look to the computer first for entertainment. "They don't wake up in the morning and turn on the TV; they wake up and turn on their computers."

The company has already secured a number of acquisitions. The deals are based upon a revenue sharing model, and include titles from PorchLight Entertainment such as

The Mysterious Geographic Explorations of Jasper Morello and Doodlez. ReelTime has also secured the rights to Toronto, Canada-based CCI and Cellar Door's Eckhart-an animated series about a little mouse who grows up on a magical island—that will make its U.S. premiere on the broadband network.

Zaslow is still very much in the acquisition mode; but she believes the future success of ReelKids hinges on the delivery method more than the content.

"Everybody understands that this is a burgeoning area and they are saying now is the time to jump in," she says. Broadband players, she adds, will most likely all end up featuring the same content "because all the studios know that this is the future."

Zaslow believes ReelTime's advantage lies in its peer-to-peer file sharing technology and point and click accessibility. Unlike other broadband networks, ReelTime relies on



Doodlez will soon be on ReelKids TV

users sharing files as they watch them on their computers or via a TV connected to a computer, and not on bandwidth capacity.

"As the other companies become more successful they are going to have to purchase more and more bandwidth, that is costly," she says. "For us, it is limitless."

The service has been set up with a subscription-based revenue model, membership costing US\$9.99 per month (half price for the first month) and specific titles selling for anywhere from US\$.99 and up. ReelKids is expected to launch in Q2 2007. GR

Sales Roundup								
Program	Broadcaster	Style/Format	Demo	Producer/Distributor				
1 Minute in a Museum	France 3 RAI (Italy) The Disney Channel (Japan) EBS (Korea) IPTV (Korea) TV5 (francophone)	mixed media/60 x 1 minute	kids	Awol				
Angelina Ballerina Barney Bob the Builder Kipper Oswald Percy the Park Keeper Rubbadubbers Thomas & Friends	Veo	2-D/39 x 15 minutes live action/40 x 30 minutes stop motion/52 x 10 minutes 2-D/39 x 10 minutes 2-D/52 x 15 minutes 2-D/13 x 10 minutes stop motion/20 x 30 minutes mixed media/26 x 30 minutes	preschool	HIT Entertainment				
Bali	YLE (Finland) RTP (Portugal) EBS (Korea) IPTV (Korea) Monaco Info (Monaco)	2-D/52 x 13 minutes	preschool	Awol/Planet Nemo				
Iron Kid	Jetix (France and Spain) TVE (Spain) Mediaset (Italy) TV1 (Portugal)	3-D/26 x 30 minutes	kids	BRB Internacional				
Postman Pat	ORF (Austria) Rai/Sat/Raitre (Italy) YLE (Finland) NRK (Norway)	stop-motion/various x 30 minutes	kids	Entertainment Rights				





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# Studio B looks deeper into what's buzzing in-house

eeping the creative well from running dry is a continual challenge. Thus finding viable concepts to put into development is top of mind for most prodoos. To assuage the situation Vancouver, Canada's Studio B Productions has just started a unique internal program, B-Hive.tv Shorts.

The idea is to field toon pitches from any and all of the company's 160 employees and help the cream rise to the top. "We want to help them realize what's in their heads and get it out there," says Kirsten Newlands, producer of B-Hive.TV Shorts. And founding partners Chris Bartleman and Blair Peters are funding the project that has so far seen two 2-D shorts to fruition within 12 weeks from greenlighting to completion.

Once the internal pitch gets accepted, the company that's currently producing *Being Ian* and *Ricky Sprocket Showbiz Boy* gives the successful canditdates a full animation crew, a sound mixer and a composer to deliver the final product in HD. "It ends up being really high quality and ready for broadcast on any platform," Newlands says.

Of course, the goal is to birth projects that have the potential to translate into longer-form series that Studio B can shop to international broadcasters. So far, the first two are headed to Cannes.



Look What My Sister Dragged In was one of B-Hive.tv Shorts' first pitches

Board supervisor Rob Boutilier conceived *Look What My Sister Dragged In*, and the three-minute short about a sweet-looking cat that turns out to be rather malevolent is screening at MIPCOM Jr. While the second short *Super Villian*, created by layout supervisor Kevin Long that features an evil genius who just can't adjust to life in retirement, will have a presence at Studio B's MIPCOM stand.

It's possible that the prodo will open up the B-Hive for creatives working outside of Studio B and also create a web channel to showcase successful projects in the future, but for now the goal is to keep creativity buzzing internally. **LC** 

# News in Brief

## **Sesame lands in Eastern European neighborhoods**

New York-based nonprofit organization Sesame Workshop will be making quite a splash in Eastern Europe in the next few months as it rolls out several new Sesame-themed programming blocks in Poland, Hungary and Croatia via a deal with regional broadcaster Minimax.



The Workshop is greenlighting 26 more eps of Play With Me Sesame

Additionally, in December, the same broadcaster is putting shows *Play With Me Sesame*, *Elmo's World* and *Global Grover* together in a programming block for Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The same three series will also play a prominent role in yet another Sesame block planned by broadcaster Magma for Croatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Slovenia, Serbia and Montenegro beginning in 2007.

The hot market for The Workshop's series in emerging territories has since convinced the organization to greenlight another 26 eps of *Play With Me Sesame*, bringing the total number to 104 half hours.



Canuck *Prank Patrol* moves over to the Beeb

# Punk'd for kids heads across the pond

In what could go into the "turnabout is fair play" file, Montreal-based production company Apartment 11 and L.A. distributor MarVista Entertainment have inked a deal to sell a tween liveaction format of *Prank Patrol*—a YTV Original Production—to the BBC.

Of course, the majority of format sales usually go the other way across the pond (*American Idol* is only one of the most popular examples) and

are centered on adult-skewing content, but the reality show where kids get the opportunity to plan and execute elaborate pranks captured the imagination of the pubcaster.

The 20 x 28-minute British version of the show is being produced by Bakermedia, and it launched on BBC One and CBBC on September 16. MarVista retains distribution rights for the British version, except in the U.K., Canada and Ireland, in addition to rights for the original version.





For worldwide distribution rights contact: Ed Galton - Xilam Animation - Edgalton@xilam.com - Tel: + 44 207 286 2160
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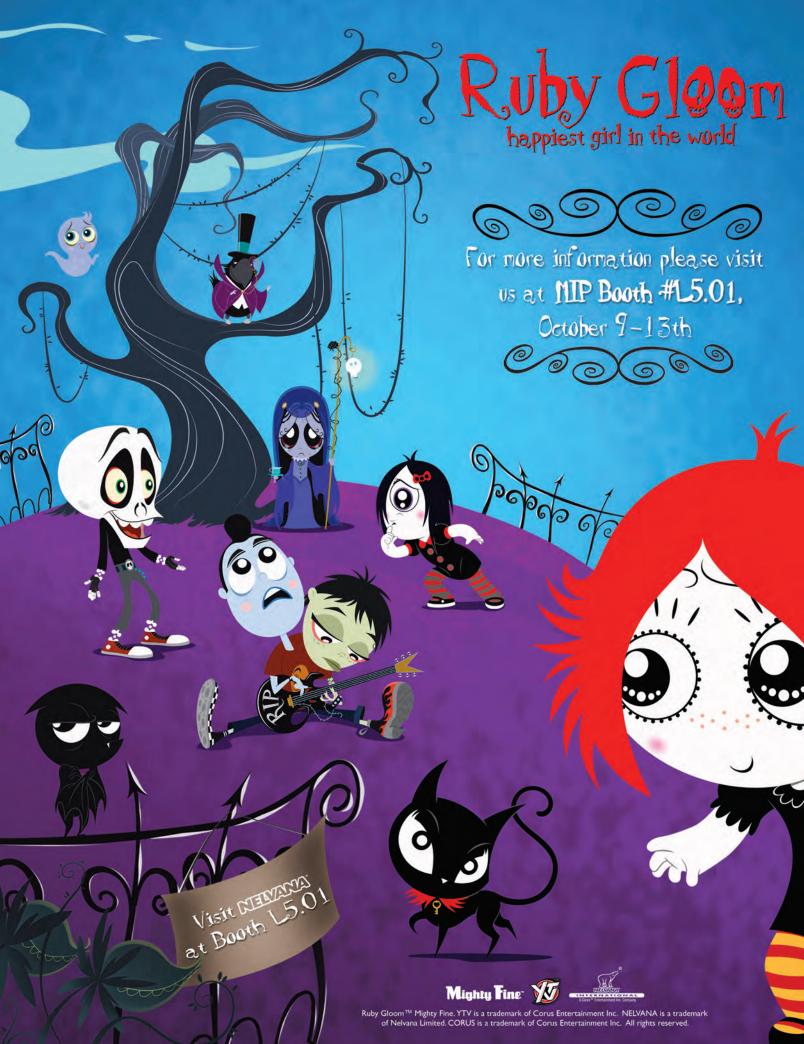
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WBCP just picked up Brazilian licensing rights for Vooz's Pucca





# BRAZIL STEPS OUT OF MEXICO'S SHADOW

by amanda burgess

Growing at 15% annually, Brazil's L&M market is heating up

an international licensing market, Latin America has been heating up over the past few years, with much of the buzz focusing on the most active and profitable country—Mexico. But it's Brazil that currently has international licensors and local agents talking, both in terms of opportunity and growth.

Character merchandise accounted for US\$1 billion in retail sales and an estimated US\$60 million in royalty

revenues in 2003, with Brazilian licensing association ABRAL estimating market growth at approximately 15% annually. And with a mere 400 active licenses, there is ample room for new properties targeting each segment of the kids market.

While family-oriented feature film properties like Disney's *Cars* and *The Incredibles* and DreamWorks' *Madagascar* perform particularly well in Brazil, TV stands as the main kids property driver. But, before you go running to Brazilian broadcasters with your new 13-episode series in hand, take heed of this market caveat from local licensing agency Exim, "animation is typically stripped Monday to Friday in Brazil, with Saturday morning repeats," cautions Celso Rafael, GM of Exim Brazil. "So if there are only 26 episodes available, your series will air in little over a month."

Not exactly a stark broadcast reality (who wouldn't want their series broadcast daily?), but this is compounded by the fact that terrestrial broadcasters only reach 50% of the total kids audience with morning programing. Brazilian kids go to school either in

the morning or afternoon, and there are no afternoon kids blocks. After-school blocks are available on cable, but there is limited access and penetration in Brazil—only 20% of the total population subscribes.

Exim is exploring the world of after-school programming in a new joint-venture with Brazilian broadcaster Rede TV. In addition to a daily preschool block running from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m., for which Exim has licensed a portfolio of Nickelodeon preschool hits like *Dora the Explorer*, Exim and Rede TV also air an anime block at 6 p.m., when all kids are home from school. "We're trying to be strategic about our time slot and differentiate ourselves," says Exim's Rafael. "And anime does particularly well in Brazil."

Other Asian properties currently performing well in Brazil include Sanrio's Hello Kitty and Vooz Co.'s Pucca. At press time, Warner Bros. Consumer Products had just acquired the rights to license, manufacture, import, distribute, promote and sell Puccabranded merchandise in Brazil. The program, targeted to launch in January 2007 (just in time for Brazil's back-to-school season) will include apparel, accessories, toys & games, housewares & domestics, gifts, stationery and collectibles.

"Several different types of properties do well here," says Salvador Viramontes, VP of Latin America for WBCP. "They can be local properties, Asian properties or international properties based on U.S. animation." WB's stable of superhero brands, like Superman and Batman, are solid performers in the boys market, while Strawberry Shortcake (DIC) and Polly Pocket (Mattel) are gaining ground with girls. On the equal-appeal front, Nickelodeon's SpongeBob SquarePants is the clear winner with boys and girls.

Local properties also play a key role in Brazil's licensing market,

"Brazil" continued on page 66

# The Girls get DIC's slumber party started

's DIC Entertainment has been on quite a roll this year, scoring a Saturday morning broadcast block on CBS with KOL and snapping up U.K. licensing agency CPLG to name a few initiatives. And new tween entertainment brand Slumber Party Girls should keep the momentum going.

This past summer, Geffen Records chairman Ron Fair helped pull together the group of five singing, dancing, acting teens who make up the Slumber Party Girls—hosts of the new CBS block and the in-house music act on the block's upcoming series *Dance Revolution*. The girls, who all come from different backgrounds and have five distinct personalities, were drawn from a pool of more than 1,000 hopefuls who attended Fair's open auditions.

To get tween girls familiar with the group, KOL's DJ Rick has started playing its first

single "Bubblegum" on his broadband show that pulls in more than one million viewers. A CD was made available for download in mid-September, while physical copies hit stores at the beginning of this month, with the strength of Geffen's marketing department in tow. And two more TV projects are in the works to support the brand.

Full details were not available at press time, but Fowler says a Sunday night TV movie musical featuring the Girls will air in Q1 2007. She readily gives a nod to the success of Disney's *High School Musical* for re-igniting interest in the genre, but says the Girls' movie should have an edge because of the amount of exposure the group will have before it goes to air. Also on the drawing board is a modern-day version of *The Monkeys* sitcom, showcasing the band as it encounters various wacky situations.



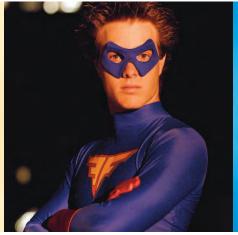
The Slumber Party Girls with KOL's DJ Rick

As for licensing and merch, Fowler says she'll be ready to announce primary partners by the end of the month and the mass-market program will roll out in two phases. First expect to see product designed to meet the immediate needs of the fans, including posters, calendars, key chains and fashion tops in stores by early 2007. Then later in the year, DIC's planning to go out with publishing, apparel and fashion dolls. **LC** 











# Milly, Molly

13 x 30 minute or 26 x 15 minute series

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### "Brazil" continued from page 63

with Televisa's *El Chavo del 8*, an animated series based on a popular live-action series that first aired on the channel in 1971, leading the pack. The show is set in Mexico and chronicles the adventures of El Chavo, his friends Quico and La Chilindrina and neighbors Don Ramón, Doña Florinda and Professor Jirafales. Although it originated in Mexico, the property has cultural roots throughout Latin America. "Brazilians relate emotionally with properties and what they are watching on TV," explains Mary Carmen Rotter

Alday, MD of Televisa Licencias, which acts as Brazilian agent for international outlets such as MTV Networks/Nickelodeon, FremantleMedia and Endemol.

It seems Brazilians get equally emotional about their consumer products. "Today's consumers in Brazil are demanding a better price-quality ratio. They want a product that is not just character-slapped, but one with design and quality that is priced competitively and affordably," says WBCP's Viramontes. Interestingly, while the upper 2.6% of the population holds 29.4% of the country's buying power (US\$150 billion), it is the lower three-quarters of the

In terms of market trends, direct-to-retail deals are on the rise, but appear to be limited to the apparel category, where retailers can draw on the country's manufacturing base. In-store promotions and activities are also hot in a region ruled by supermarkets, hypermarkets, department and club stores.

Seasonal buying patterns follow a slightly different path in Brazil than in other Western territories, with Christmas taking a backseat to Children's Day (October 12), the number-one season for sales of licensed products, with market-

> ing beginning in early fall. The market is witnessing some increased action on the Christmas front, however. "Malls are beginning to license characters for their seasonal décor and displays, says Exim's Rafael. "And if they license say, SpongeBob SquarePants to be part of their Christmas theme, they will tie the property to a promotion to drive consumers into stores to buy related items. It's great exposure for children's properties."

# Population and media usage

Population 188,078,227 Children 0 to 14 25.8% People 15 to 64 68.1% Birth rate 16.56 births/1,000 pop. (2006 estimate) GDP per capita \$8,400 (2005 estimate) TV broadcast stations 138 (1997) Internet users 25.9 million (2005) Internet hosts 4,392,695 (2005) Radios AM-1,365, FM-296 (1999) Cell phones 65.6 million (2004) Telephone landlines 42,382,200 (2004) Source: CIA World Fact Book 2006

population that sets aside the greatest percentage of its dispos-

able income for consumer products at 51.5% (Source: Strategy Research Corporation, UN Demographic Yearbook, UNESCO Statistical Yearbook).

No where is the quest for quality and affordability more evident than in Brazil's top category for licensed product, apparel. The south region of the country is known for apparel production and other key territories are beginning to take note. "Large

local apparel chains such as C&A are consolidating their positions and investing very aggressively in product design, and this is starting to be noticed in Europe and the U.S.," says Viramontes. Of course, Brazil has a large universe of "mom and pop" stores that are very important to the apparel segment, he

adds. So success in the category is dependent on how you distribute in order to reach those stores in addition to the large chains.

# **Largest Retailers in Brazil**

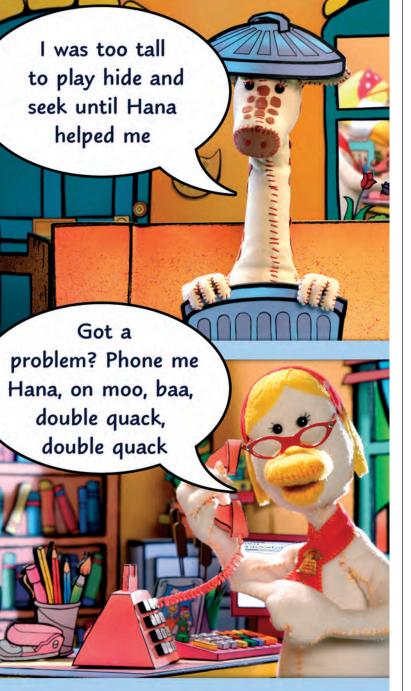
Outlet	Sales US\$ billions	Format
Pão de Açucar	5.5	Supermarket, hypermarket
Carrefour	3.8	Supermarket, hypermarket
Wal-Mart	2.5	Hypermarket, club
Casas Bahia	2.0	Department
Sonae	1.5	Supermarket, hypermarket
Ponto Frio	1.2	Department
Makro	1.1	Wholesale club
L. Americanas	1.0	Variety
C&A	1.0	Apparel department
McDonald's	1.0	Fast Food
Source: Exim Brazil		

Another strong Brazilian holiday is Easter, which is ruled by a single character licensed item—the chocolate egg. "All Brazilian retailers will have huge displays—even on the ceilings—of licensed eggs for the Easter season," says Rafael. In terms of growth holidays, licensors and agents agree that Valentine's Day is becoming more important for categories such as licensed plush.

As Brazil grows as a market, it is also experiencing movement in new categories. Licensors and agents peg wireless as the fast-est-growing segment for character licensing, noting that the large "Brazil" continued on page 72











# ER readies Rupert for two merch markets

he turns 86, British icon Rupert Bear may just be entering the prime of life. Since London-based Entertainment Rights picked up the property a few years ago, it's been hard at work building a two-tiered merch strategy that will deliver Rupert to young fans and adult collectors.

For those on this side of the pond, Rupert Bear has been the star of a self-titled comic strip running in the U.K.'s Daily Express every day for the past 85 years, and this fall he's taking a turn on Five's Milkshake block in a new 52 x 10-minute CGI preschool series, *Rupert Bear—Follow the Magic*.



The iconic bear's new CGI incarnation is aimed squarely at the preschool set

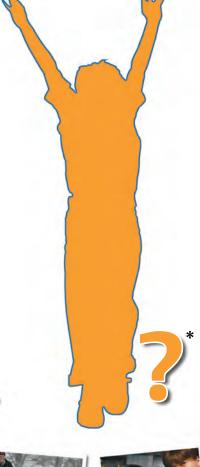
Director of consumer products Claire Shaw believes there's an opportunity for two distinct licensing programs. Tocoy Martin Yaffe and publisher Egmont are driving the program designed for this generation of preschoolers. Product will be inspired by the new TV animation and Shaw says the partners are striving to infuse the resulting playthings and books with the magical elements of the series. For example, a playset version of the series' central locale, a tree-house, will have a lot of hidden and interactive elements to keep kids engaged. And Shaw and her team are currently on the hunt for apparel, game and puzzle and stationery licensees to round out the first wave of the program that will see product at U.K. mass retailers next fall.

The program will target those adult collectors who've grown up with Rupert. There is some successful licensing with a series of annuals that ER will continue to keep in print, but Shaw is actively looking for gift and collectibles licensees to kick this specialty tier into high gear. She believes there is a possibility for some category crossover and plush immediately comes to mind. However, ER is envisioning the collectible plush will resemble the classic teddy bears of the early 20th century, while the preschool plush will be modeled on the new CGI animation. *IC* 

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# **News in Brief**

# HIT expands consumer products reach, relaunches Pingu

Since being acquired by Apax Partners in June 2005, London-based HIT Entertainment's consumer products division has been on something of an expansion tear. To that end HIT opened a new Asia Pacific Licensing, TV Sales and Distribution office in Hong Kong in September to service markets in Australia, Korea, South East Asia and India. Claire Dicey has moved from HIT's London office to Hong Kong to take the role of sales direct, South East Asia and the company is currently recruiting additional staff.

Back in the U.K., HIT has just appointed Golden Bear as U.K. and Ireland master toy licensee for quirky character Pingu, who turned 20 this year. Golden bear will kick things off with new playsets and plush modeled on the precocious penguin in January. And a new 12-minute

format based on the original stop-motion shorts-currently broadcast in 140 countries—is in the works at HOT Animation Studios. Undoubtedly, there will be more merch to follow.



# **Shutterfly snaps Clifford's picture**

On-line social expression and personal publishing service Shutterfly has signed its first character license for Scholastic's Clifford the Big Red Dog. The result is the new

Clifford-themed Photo Books in which con-

On-line publisher taps the crimson canine as its first license sumers incorporate their own photos with templated backgrounds featuring the giant crimson canine using a drag-and-drop interface. Two formats are available at shutterfly.com/photobooks: An 8 x 8 Story Book (US\$34.99), and a 12 x 12 Memory Book.

Pingu waves hello

to new U.K. master toy licensee

Golden Bear



Property	Granted by	Granted to	Product category	Demo	Release date
The Backyardigans Blue's Clues Dora the Explorer Go Diego, Go! SpongeBob SquarePants	Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products	RC2	toys vehicles, playsets	preschool	Q4 2006
Danger Mouse	FremantleMedia Enterprises	Blues Clothing Concept 2 Creation	apparel figurines	girls kids	spring 2007 November 2006
The Grim Adventures of Billy & Mandy The PowerPuff Girls	Cartoon Network Enterprises	Midway Games Mighty Fine	videogame apparel	kids girls	December 2006
Sweetypuss, Just Jimmy	J.K. Benton/Cop Corp.	Jailbird Designs	apparel	infants, kids	October 2006
Tabaluga	EM.Entertainment	Mondo S.P.A.	sport balls	kids	February 2007
Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	4 Kids Entertainment	Briarpatch	card/movie games	kids	fall 2006

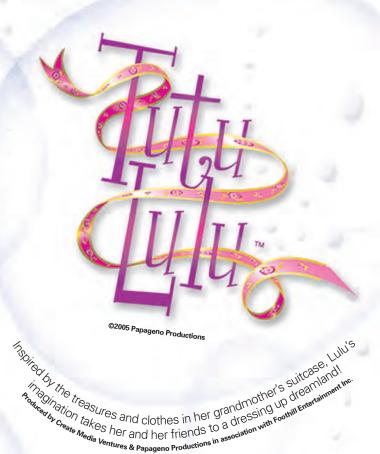


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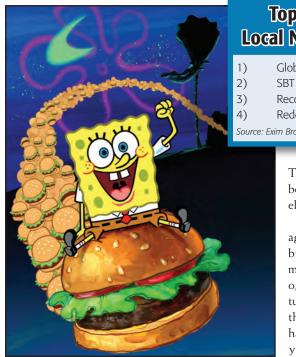


### "Brazil" continued from page 66

telcos have the marketing dollars to spend on promotions, and have been aggressive on that front with family feature films over the past couple of years. "As the technology's penetration increases, we expect that Brazil will continue to see dynamic growth in that area," says Viramontes.

Of course, every growth market has its challenges. The main obstacle for Brazil affects the entire production chain, from the licensor/ agent right down to the consumer.

The country is highly taxed at each level of production, distribution and retail. "It's what we call tax over tax over tax," says Rafael. The royalty rates in Brazil are generally the same as in other territoriesbeginning at 3% to 4% for food products and running as high as 14% for a hot license, with an 8% to



Nick's SpongeBob SquarePants merch is scoring equally well with Brazil's boys and girls

# Top **Local Nets**

- Globo
- Record TV
- Rede TV

Source: Exim Brazil

12% median. But the tax impact on price points for licensed products in Brazil makes them much more expensive than in other territories. "A toy that is sold in the U.S. for \$10 would retail for approximately \$25 in Brazil," Rafael explains.

That said, he anticipates taxation will be a key issue in the nation's looming election next year.

That issue aside, licensors and agents remain bullish on Brazil breaking free of the "growth market" moniker and becoming globally recognized as a viable business opportunity. They point to the fact that the country's currency—the real has remained stable for the past two years, and the continued expansion of international companies into the region as positive signs. N

# APPOINTMENT NOTICE



KidScreen Managing Editor Lana Castleman is delighted to announce that Kate Calder has joined the KidScreen team as Senior Writer.

Kate dove right in since starting in September taking the helm of our retail and marketing sections and eagerly pitching in where needed. She has worked as a writer and editor at several Canadian business-to-business publications, and has a background in children's book publishing. It's a great fit for KidScreen.

Please feel free to introduce yourself to Kate; she can be reached at 416-408-2300 ext. 431 or kcalder@brunico.com

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5mins x 13episodes



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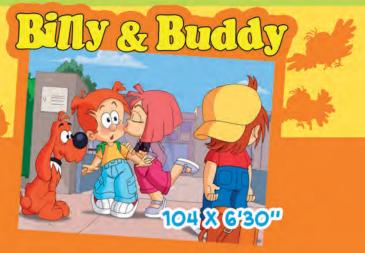


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# FALL PROMO PROPEL CURIOUS GEORGE AT RETAIL

USCPG plans for Q4 should keep monkey merch moving at mass and specialty

aintaining momentum at retail is a quandary that keeps most licensors and licensees up at night. In the case of Universal Studios Consumer Products Group, it's been more like a monkey on its back (pardon the pun). Products based on the book property Curious George have been at specialty retail for years,

but with the spring release of the film *Curious George* the sprightly primate migrated to mass retail. With a new preschool TV show launched just last month in North America the pressure is on to keep George grooving in his new retail digs, while making sure his upstairs book-based program doesn't languish. More than a year in the making, a spate of fall retail promos should help USCPG and its licensees do just that.

According to senior VP of licensing and retail Amy Taylor, Curious George's first foray into mass retail was a success. All parties involved took pains not to flood the market with product, she says, and the merch sold through. As the DVD release/TV window opens on the entertainment front, "the goal is to have retail promos every six months to...play off the themes in the TV show."

However, to make sure USCPG and its licensees continue to put out the right amount and mix of product, merchandise released through the end of 2006 will be related to the film. TV show-inspired, educational products will begin trickling into retail in early 2007.

To get the ball rolling, late this past summer Curious George Character Emporiums opened up in 600 Barnes & Noble stores across the U.S. The areas feature around 30 character SKUs

## by lana castleman

including toys and plush from master toy licensee Marvel Toys, games, puzzles and books (of course). Taylor says the retailer sees the areas as an opportunity to expand further into general merchandise and determine which categories. Plush such as Tickle & Giggle George (US\$19.99) and George dress-up beanies (US\$5.99)—which Marvel Toys director of marketing Patricia Rinaldi says are the license's top sellers—seem to have the lead, but it was too early in the program's cycle for Taylor to declare the runaway winners.

Moreover, just at press time in mid September, USCPG was readying two major programs for new and classic Curious George. Along with an end cap initiative nationwide at Toys 'R' Us, the renowned Times Square store in New York was preparing to launch the Curious George Feature Shop. The cross-merchandised department is stocking toys, games, puzzles and the movie DVD. USCPG also put together a custom 60-second spot that will broadcast for a month on the location's Geoffrey Tron external wraparound video screen.

At the same time, uptown and in upstairs retail, classic George will have a front-of-store feature section and external signage at FAO Schwartz's flagship 5th Avenue store. Taylor says the classic themed merchandise is a good fit for FAO, as since its re-launch last year it has been positioning itself as *the* retail outlet for traditional, high-end playthings.

Finally, a Curious George costumed character, supported by books from publisher Houghton Mifflin and Game Boy Advance licensee Namco, is hitting Minneapolis, Minnesota-based Target's traveling Children's Book Festival this fall. Taylor says the festival usually draws between 10,000 and 40,000 attendees per site, depending on the size of the city. This year, George will be part of the day-long festival held at public parks in Detroit, Michigan, Minneapolis, Boston, Massachusetts, and New York City.



# Toyco opens retail incubator in the

## **Mall of America**

inneapolis, Minnesota-based Manhattan Toy recently opened its first branded store. Located in the giant Mall of America just outside the twin cities, the outlet is designed to act as a testing ground for new concepts created by the toyco, as well as being a means of strengthening overall brand recognition.

"We saw this as a great opportunity to help build brand awareness for Manhattan Toy and our products like Groovy Girl," says Hugh Kennedy, VP of business development. The mall attracts 43 million visitors annually from around the world. Its management is always on the lookout for unique brands and opportunities to differentiate it as a tourist destination and approached the local toy maker to set up shop.

Kennedy says the store will be used as a testing ground for new products. "Things that we are prototyping will be put in the store to get reactions. We'll have kids interact with them and test different price points and packaging." At press time, the shop had just celebrated its grand opening weekend and didn't have any prototypes in store yet.

In the meantime, Groovy Girl, the company's popular line of hip plush dolls, has a major presence in the store, which also features other Manhattan Toy products including Whoozit, Little Lovelies, Dreamtastic, Baby Stella, Winkle and its latest additions, Petrageous and Trixieville.



Groovy Girls maker Manhattan Toy opens standalone shop in Mall of America

The company doesn't have any plans right now to create a chain of branded outlets, as it already has distribution through more than 10,000 department and specialty gift stores located in 56 countries. For next year, Manhattan Toy is developing a new Groovy Girl licensing program with licensing agent New York-based Silver Lining that will transition it from a girls play brand to a lifestyle brand. New Groovy Girl products will include merch in sporting goods, accessories, health & beauty, apparel, publishing and back-to-school categories. **KC** 

## Hydrogen fuel cell car puts kids in the driver's seat

a twist that's going to turn a few heads in the toy vehicle category and perhaps the fossil fuel industry, a Shanghai-based commercial and industrial fuel cell manufacturer has created the H-Racer. The toy car is propelled by a fuel cell that comes complete with its own solar-powered hydrogen refueling station.

The educational toy is "the first mass consumer product available showing people how fuel cell technology works," says Justin Barrow, global sales and marketing manager for Horizon Fuel Cell Technologies.

Horizon isn't a toy company per se, but the H-Racer, which it debuted at the Tokyo Toy Fair this summer, is aimed at educating kids and encouraging an interest in using fuel cells. The hope is that one day today's kids will drive life-size versions of the car to their grownup jobs.

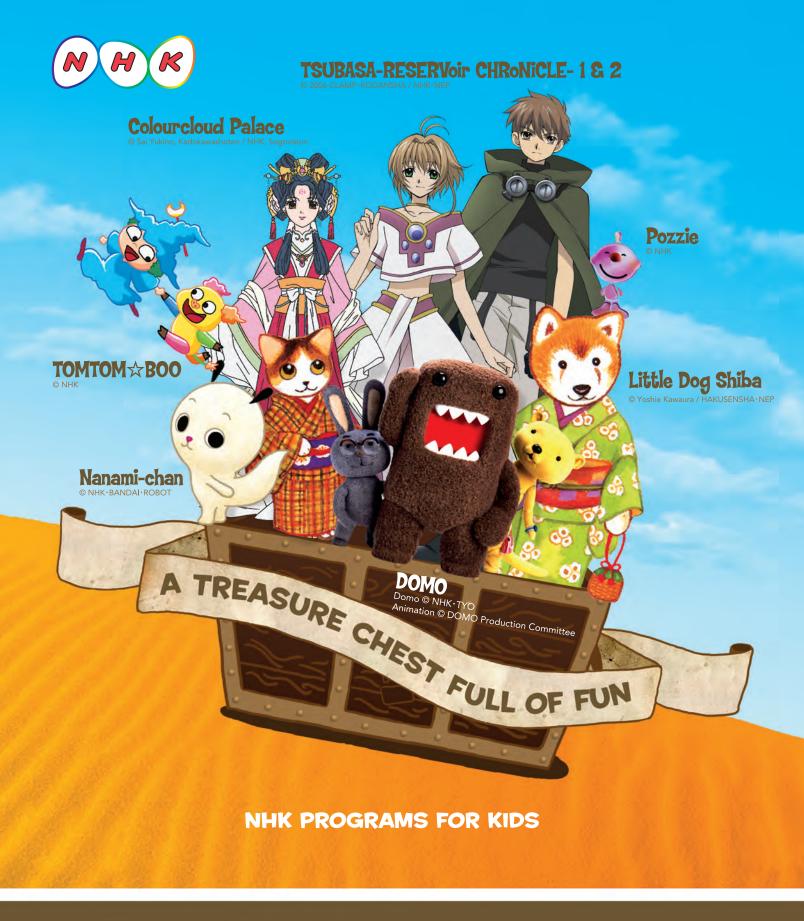


The 6.5-inch x 3-inch H-Racer has a suggested retail price of US\$110 and comes in the form of a kit that kids can put together easily, giving them a chance to see and touch the fuel cell that fits into the base of the car and connects to a tiny electric motor. To keep the motor running, kids can then fill the hydrogen refueling station with water where its solar panel powers an electolizer

that converts water into hydrogen and oxygen. The hydrogen is then pumped out of the station into the car's onboard tank just like gas. Kids can watch the blue storage tank inside the car filling up. Once the car is unplugged from the station and turned on, it can zoom around for more than 100 yards. Barrow says the next generation of H-Racer will be remote controlled.

Already the tiny car has been nominated for the London Science Museum's Smart Toy Award, the Intel Environment Award in Silicon's Valley's Tech Museum, the Well-Tech Award from the Leonardo Da Vinci Science and Technology Museum in Milan and the Young Inventors Award, also in Italy.

Horizon plans to show off the toy at the New York and Nuremberg Toy Fairs and is looking for partners to build a distribution network. **KC** 



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# A sneak peek at Fall Toy Fair

's been a year of upheaval for the TIA and the toy industry in Manhattan. Despite being unable to come to an agreement on a permanent showroom site to replace the history-laden buildings at the corner of 23rd St. and 5th Avenue, the organization has confirmed The American International Fall Toy Show will remain in New York until at least 2007.

The TIA booked Javits for October next year and reaffirmed its stance that the city is the heart of the toy industry and will continue to host the fair targeted at mass/long-lead retail buyers for the foreseeable future. (February Toy Fair is booked at the center through 2010.)

In the meantime, a few toycos have given us the inside scoop on what they'll be showing at this year's autumn exhibit and we thought we'd highlight some nifty new products.

Deerfield Beach, Florida's Play Along is building on its successful 2005/06 Doodle Bear line. Doodle Bear Baby (US\$14.99) comes with a removable pacifier and diaper, and Slumber Party Doodle Girl is decked out in glow-in-the-dark pajamas, and totes her very own sleep mask. Like their original counterparts, the new Doodle toys are doodleable, wash-



Doodle Bear Babies from Play Along come with all-new erasable markers

able and erasable. The Babies are packaged with all-new erasable markers and a magic eraser pen, while the Girls' markers come in glow barrels, lighting the way for little girls to doodle in the dark.

Wild Planet in San Francisco is taking a hightech approach to the most low-tech of implements, the ballpoint pen. New Mighty Pens (US\$4.99 to US\$6.99) will be available in six styles and combine writing functionality with a lot of play value. A few notable models include: Jet Flyer that launches a fold-out plane; Mini Hoops that unfolds to form a mini-basketball court complete with hoop, three balls, ball holder

New Mighty Pens merge ballpoint pens with fun activities

and launcher; and Rip Choppers, a pen with a ripcord power launcher and two flying helicopters.

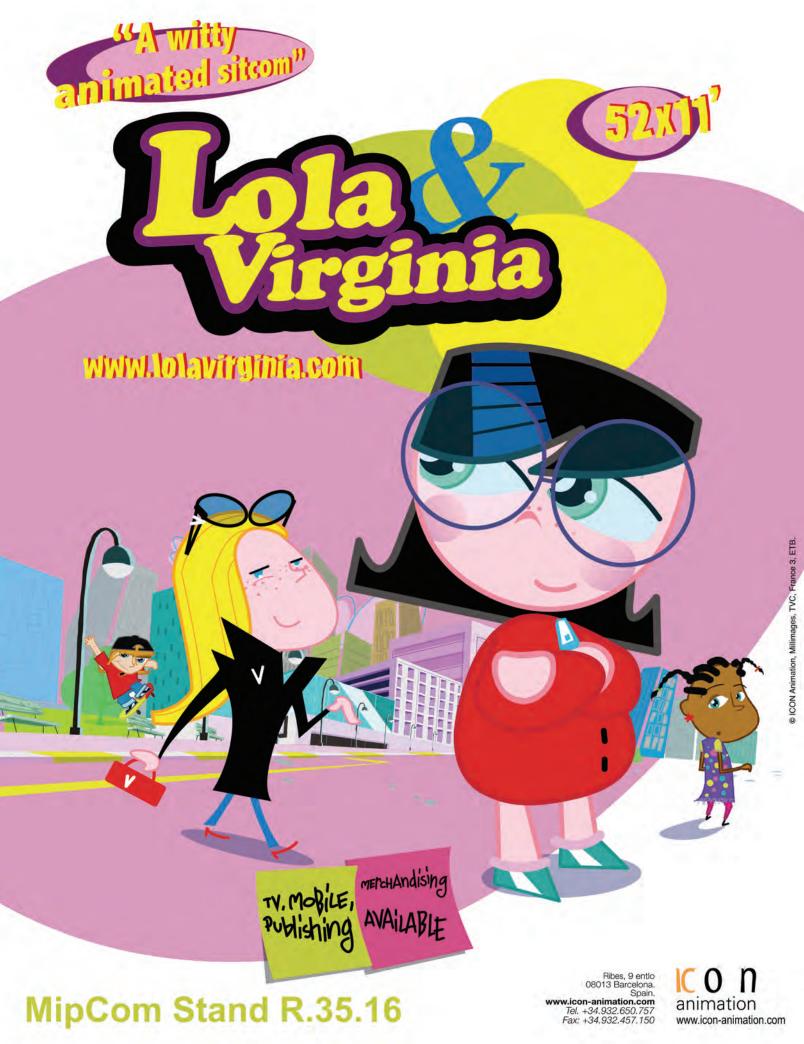
Hot on the heels of signing the master toy license for the anime brand that started it all, Malibu, California-based Jakks Pacific has a slew of toys lined up to showcase the world of Pokémon. One item of particular note is the Deluxe Talking Pokedex (US\$19.99). The new device is a handheld, all-in-one virtual encyclopedia and Pokemon gaming system that includes three interactive battling games. It also has pictures of all 386 Pokemon characters complete with their individual battling stats and calls out characters names when the user selects them. **KC** 

## **News in Brief**

## **Extreme playground aims to attract tweens**

While not exactly an off-the-shelf item, U.K. playground and sports equipment manufacturer SMP has come out with a souped up line of playground equipment whose style may just trickle down to smaller home versions of the product. The company is hoping it can entice tweens back to the playground with the Nexus activity system—it definitely isn't your average preschooler's swing set. The line has a high-tech modern look, sliding poles, climbers, perches, hammock nets, rock faces and sliding rails all meant to evoke the extreme sports older kids aspire to perform. Already installed in Europe, the Nexus playgrounds are being launched in the U.S. market and three variations are available: Nexus Core, Nexus Velocity, Velocity Rock Climb N' Slide and Nexus Whizzer.







The immersive, realtime game introduces

key characters to kids a month before Flushed Away debuts

romotional on-line games have been part of the kids marketer arsenal since the late 1990's. But DreamWorks and partners Mark Burnett Productions and broadband behemoth AOL are breaking new ground in the space. To introduce kids and families to the cast, settings and

storyline of upcoming CGI film *Flushed Away* a full month before it hits U.S. theatres in early November, the triumvirate have produced *Flushed Away*: *Underground Adventure*.

The game launches at aol.com/flushedawaygame at the beginning of this month, upping the ante for sponsored games to follow. Borrowing a page from Burnett's *Survivor*, the new venture has been constructed like a month-long super contest containing several new mini-challenges issued throughout the week that players must win to advance in the overall competition. (Points and prizes are also awarded just for trying.) At the end of the month, the player who's advanced through the most rounds of challenges in the least amount of time wins the grand prize. The other twist is that results will be posted in real time, so all players can keep track of where they're sitting.

"The idea was to create a piece of standalone entertainment, not just a movie promo or stunt," says Roy Bank, head of development and current programming for Burnett. The challenges

by lana castleman

are largely designed like casual games—quick and relatively simple to play. So not only can a child as young as seven complete the tasks without mom or dad's help, but parents—especially moms who make up a big part of the on-line casual gaming market right now—might also want to play with their kids or on their own.

Moreover, DreamWorks gave Burnett the kind of access to the film's digital assets that is often reserved for master interactive game licensees to create custom animation for *Underground Adventure*. Not only will kids get introduced to the main characters before the film streets, they'll get to take a trip through settings not seen in the film at all. The plan, says Banks, is to make the audience anticipate the original film's debut in the same way it does sequels.

Executive VP of AOL Kevin Conroy likens this new marketing tactic to "laying out breadcrumbs to draw people into the movie." And AOL is making sure it's a broad trail. *Underground Adventure* will be promoted across AOL's network including the paid and free services, and KOL. Conroy estimates it will enjoy approximately 90 million impressions on AOL's network alone. The company will also use search marketing, advertising on all major search engines and conduct a paid key word search campaign.

Additionally, DreamWorks' marketing arm is promoting the game, and it will be further cross-marketed with its three major sponsors, yet to be announced at press time. **\( \)** 



# New study to help kids food marketers

's no secret that childhood obesity, in the U.S. especially, is a hot topic. And more so now than ever, kids food marketers are grappling with how to deal with the crisis. To that end, industry research and consulting firm Harris Interactive put together "Healthy Eating for Kids", a study released via webinar last month. The aim was to present the challenges and opportunities facing the packaged goods industry and its marketers.

"Before government regulation takes over completely and you continue to be tried in the court of public opinion, smart marketers will take control of their own destiny," said Cathy Holt, VP of consumer packaged goods research at Harris Interactive. "You have an opportunity to positively influence public perceptions and to do the right thing."

Lest marketers think they're the last ones parents want to hear from, Holt pointed out parents are asking food companies to go back to the kitchen and make healthier foods and then market them to kids, encouraging them to make healthier choices. The best plan of attack would be to offer healthier versions of current food products because people tend to stick to what they know rather than change habits. Kraft's recent move to use only non-trans fat in Oreo cookies, while maintaining the same taste and price point, is a good example. In fact, Harris provided food marketers with a menu of proactive ideas to choose from (see sidebar on this page).

Harris Interactive drew from several studies and surveys it had conducted that found Americans see a shared responsibility among parents, schools and the food industry for the health of their children. Specifically, one of its recent surveys found 65% of respondents agreed advertising by the food industry directed at kids is a major contributor to the rising rate of childhood obesity, and more than half agree the government should be more involved than it is right now.

To that end, this school year marks the first year under the Child Nutrition Act where school districts are required to put local wellness plans in place, including nutrition guidelines. Also, the recent agreement signed by the American Beverage Association will soon eliminate the availability of non-diet soda in school vending machines and high schools in the U.S.

Findings from the Center for Disease Control indicate that 16%

## **Healthy ideas for kids food marketers**

- Provide recipes and easier-to-read nutritional information on packaging
- Sponsor a TV show for families and kids to cook and eat together on The Food Network
- Show families eating around the table when putting together marketing campaigns
- Develop educational and promotional materials that help parents figure out what to pack in kids lunches
- Sponsor programs such as mealmagic.com, an on-line system sold to schools that lets parents control their kids food purchases
- Partner with physical activity initiatives such as America on the Move (www.americanonthemove.org)

Source: Cathy Holt, VP of consumer packaged goods research at Harris Interactive

of kids in the U.S.—that's nine million—are obese, compared to 13% in the 1980s. The Institute of Medicine reports that among American kids born in the year 2000, 40% of girls and 30% of boys risk becoming diabetic. *KC* 

## **News in Brief**

## **Sesame Workshop prepares kids for emergencies**

Sesame Workshop is set to release a family emergency preparedness kit for families. The nonprofit educational organization says the number of emergencies people in the U.S. have faced in the past five years, including hurricanes, storms, floods, wildfires and on-going threats of terrorism, has spurred the need for an instructional emergency kit. Banking and brokerage firm Bear Sterns partnered with The Workshop to develop and produce the educational outreach program. Some 25,000 kits are being distributed next spring via health care, emergency preparedness and childcare networks.

A print guide for parents containing tips such as how to create a plan as a family and help children memorize basic personal information is also part of the package. The kids content will include an activity book and DVD starring Sesame Street Muppets in a story about being prepared for emergencies.



Elmo will help kids deal with crises

## It's your great 40th Anniversary, Charlie Brown

In celebration of the 40th anniversary of the classic Peanuts Halloween special, *It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown*, grocery stores across the U.S. will be stocked with pumpkins featuring Peanuts-branded stickers. United Media has inked a deal with Hinkle Produce to supply approximately 10-million pumpkins to populate in-store Peanuts Pumpkin Patches this fall. Additionally, Snoopy.com is hosting a dedicated Great Pumpkin mini-site featuring a celebrity page and trivia, while Paramount Home Entertainment is releasing a 40th anniversary DVD of the special that will air nationally on ABC.

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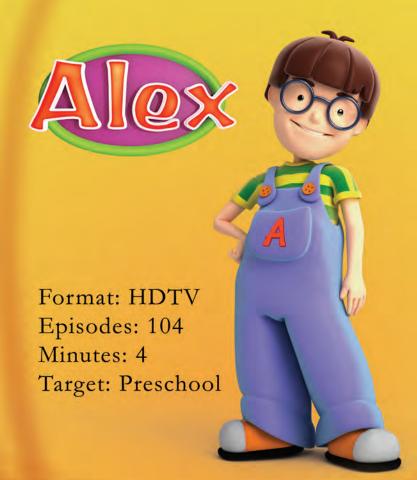




# Telmo and Tala "Little Cooks"



Format: HDTV Episodes: 52 Minutes: 7 Target: 4-7





Minutes: 4

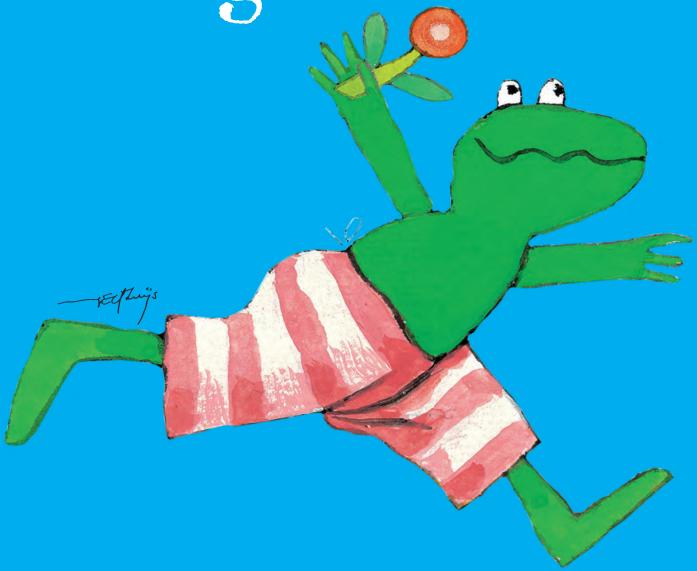
Target: Preschool

At Nipcom

At R. 33.9. Creen. Il



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# interactive media matrix

by dan waldman

## **Cartoon Network enters MMOG market**

Kids shows and movies transitioning into the video game realm is nothing new. Cartoon Network, however, is taking things a step further with the development of its first massive multi-player on-line game (MMOG) launching in 2008.

CN has teamed up with Seoul, Korea-based Grigon Entertainment to create the MMOG for kids six to 11 years old that will be available for download free of charge. But kids will still have rely on mom or dad's credit cards to pay sub-

scription and transaction fees within the game. (Prices have yet to be determined.)

In terms of gameplay, director of technology for Cartoon Network New Media Chris Waldron says it won't stray far from other established on-line role playing games in the U.S. The game will also make use of CN's slate of characters, such as Ben 10, Mac and Bloo from Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends and the Kids Next Door. Down the road, the game may feature its own original characters as well.

Waldron says CN chose to work with Grigon because it has been successful in the



Cartoon Network characters race through wacky lands in new games

Korean market making MMOGs with a cartoony quality to them, such as Seal Online and Oring Online.

In the meantime, fans of CN shows like Powerpuff Girls, Johnny Bravo, Dexter's Laboratory, and Cow and Chicken will be able to put their favorite animated characters behind the wheel this month with the launch of Cartoon Network Racing (US\$29.99) for PlayStation 2 and Nintendo DS consoles. Developed by Denmark-based The Game Factory, it's a kid-targeted racing combat sim involving wacky CN-inspired environments and character crossovers.

# THQ looks to burn up the sales charts

Game developer THQ has wasted no time prepping itself for the coming next-gen game onslaught. The Calabasas, California-based maker of many licensed kids titles has recently announced the formation of a new studio set up specifically for next-gen game development.

Based in Carlsbad, California, Incinerator Games is already hard at work. Incinerator GM Bill Todd says the studio was intentionally conceived as a small outfit. The team consist of 12 or so very sawy and experienced game makers, most of whom are former senior-level developers from gaming giants such as Sony and Rockstar Games.

The team's first project is creating a version of THQ's bestselling Cars, based on Disney's movie released this past summer, for Nintendo's upcoming Wii console. Todd says the next project will most likely be a next-gen port of another established THQ title, but looking down the line he is hoping to develop original games as well.

## **Keeping kids safe on the net**

Keeping in tune with its mandate to promote kids safety through technology, Darnestown, Maryland-based Stelor Productions has designed specific software tools that allow kids to work with their parents to gain customizable and safe access to the internet via their home computers.

Its new PIXKEY encryption authentication system will give kids custom password-protected access to a computer by clicking on a programmed image, such as a fish in an aquarium or clowns at a carnival, in sequence. To enter a password, the images have to be manipulated properly, such as dragging the selected fish into an underwater cave. The chosen pictures then spin off a password close to 10,000 characters in length, making it very difficult to hack. The password system will work in conjunction with another one of Stelor's new creations—the KidOS operating system. The OS will give parents the option of offering their kids a fully customizable interface that authenticates age-appropriate sites while enabling parents to permit or lock their kids out of sites accordingly. Stelor CEO Steven A. Esrig says the system will also adapt to the child's usage patterns over time.

The software should be market ready for the first quarter of 2007 and Stelor is now seeking partners for licensing, distribution and retail.



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# With its double-digit growth, the Indian animation market is inking more and more co-production deals

While India may not be a major player in the global animation market just yet, it's certainly flexing its muscles as a rapidly emerging hub for off-shore work. Not only is its animation industry registering 35% annual growth, but NASSCOM is pegging its worth at just under a billion dollars by 2009.

The country is also starting to give the competition a run for its money. Some experts have ranked it a more attractive animation destination than its leading competitors, including the Philippines, Korea, Taiwan and China.

What's the appeal of the land of the tiger for the foreign toon trade? Simply put, it's a tempting mix of state-of-the-art animation studios, skilled talent, excellent English-language skills and good old-fashioned cost advantage.

# **Toonz Animation: Pioneering co-production deals**

As the country seeks to grab a bigger piece of the global offshore pie, Indian animation studios are bullishly opting for coproduction deals sooner than working off the traditional work-forhire model. One of the studios leading the way is Toonz Animation India Private Ltd., a full-service animation house owned by the Geneva-based Comcraft Group.



You don't have to know every word to enjoy the art of reading. Welcome to Paddy's Pages. (Target: 3 to 6 / 11min X 22 eps)

"We were the first company that started the [co-production] trend in India," says the company's CEO Prabhakaran Jayakumar, who helped steer its earliest coproduction, back in 2001 with Canadian-based La Fête Productions. "We realized that by doing work for hire you're not adding value to the company. But you need knowledge before you can plunge into your own IPs."



A Hole in One is a lightyear away! Welcome to the Universe of "Space Golf" (Target: 6 to 11 / 11min X 52 eps)

With almost seven years experience in the business, countless awards, a 25,000-square-foot studio in Trivandrum outfitted with 150 CGI workstations and manned by 600 professional animators—many from its own training academy—Toonz Animation excels in all aspects of production. "The two qualities we can boast are quality of animation and on-time deliveries," says Jayakumar.

In some cases, this even means dramatically ahead-of-schedule deliveries. A new 78-episode 3D TV series co-produced with Hallmark Entertainment, titled Finley the Fire Engine, was delivered a full month ahead of its one-year due date.

Toonz Animation's CGI facilities alone can produce four 22-minute television episodes per month, and its 2-D division can pump out three. While it normally focuses on the production end of projects, the company has also skillfully managed everything from script to screen for companies like Marvel Studios and Hallmark Entertainment.

# Toonz Animation: Attracting the heavyweights

The list is long and it's impressive. As one of India's oldest and most respected animation companies, Toonz Animation India has built an impressive clientele roster over the years.

Marvel Studios, Walt Disney Singapore, Hallmark Entertainment, Paramount Pictures, Cartoon Network and the BBC are just some of the recognizable powerhouses Toonz Animation has worked with. "It's quite an enviable list," says Prabhakaran Jayakumar, CEO of Toonz Animation India Private Ltd. "Ninety percent of the work we do is for clients in the U.S. and Europe."

The award-winning company is currently producing a groundbreaking 26-episode Wolverine X-Man series for Marvel Studios, as well as Dragonlance, a DVD movie for Paramount Home Video, in collaboration with Hasbro and Commotion Pictures. Another project in development is a Halloween special for Sky TV in the U.K.

Also in the works are some CGI feature film deals with major U.S. studios, which are expected to be finalized in the next two to three months.

www.toonzanimationindia.com

# **DQ** Entertainment: Playing it big

Overseas companies seeking co-production partnerships also regularly come knocking on the door of DQ Entertainment Ltd. (DQE), India's largest animation and game asset production company.

"Co-productions and co-partnerships for international TV series, DVD movies and feawture films are here to stay," says the company's CEO Tapaas Chakravarti. "Sharing the risks of creating a large-budget IP with several partners is a good way to produce a TV series or an animated property."

DQE produced the first of its TV series, Prezzymolo, in coproduction for RAI Fiction in 2000. Since then, the Hyderabad-based operation has co-produced animated projects with leading European and North American producers, including Mike Young Production in the U.S.; Alphanim in France; Red Kite Productions in the U.K.; and Amberwood Productions in Canada.

Today, DQE owns territorial rights and global profit participation for 20 TV series as well as a number of DVD movies. Almost 80% of its current work is based on co-partnerships and

co-ventures, ranging from 10% to 50% partnership with real cash investment.

Projects currently in the works include Little Leonardo, a 26 x 22 minute TV series for RAI Fiction; the  $2^{nd}$  and  $3^{rd}$  seasons of Pet Pals, 52 x 11 minute also for RAI Fiction, Italy; and Pinky & Perky, a high-end CGI TV series, co-produced with the BBC.

As well, DQE is co-producing 3D feature films with major film distribution companies. To facilitate production in this area, DQE formed a joint venture with Onyx Films, called DQOnyx, buying a 51% stake in the Paris-based company. The films co-produced by the new JV include Skyland, Night of the Child and The Enchanted Boy. The first scheduled for global release at the beginning of 2008.

In another partnering move, DQE recently took a 20% equity stake in a partnership with Method Films SA, a French TV



LES GNOUFS-DQ Entertainment Ltd.

## **DQ** Entertainment:

Diversifies into game content development

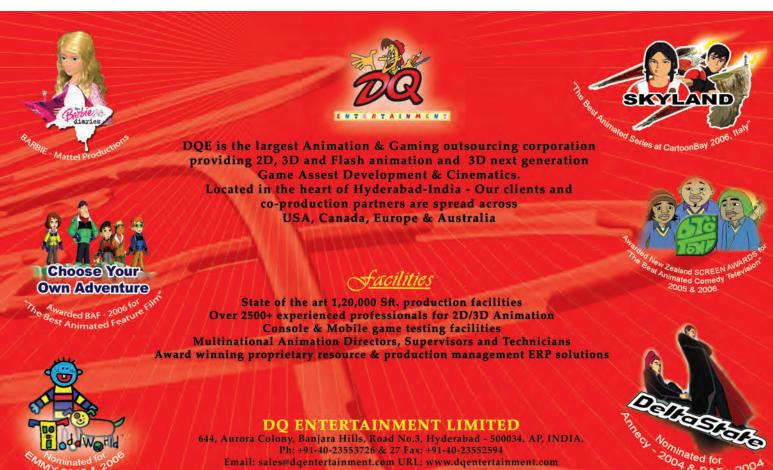
With a keen eye on building a long-lasting broad-based product offering for sustainable business, it didn't take long for DQ Entertainment (DQE) to set its sights on the booming gaming sector.

Eight months ago, DQE launched an extensive next-generation 3-D gaming assets and cinematic division, which is already staffed by 250 employees. The division creates next generation 3-D gaming assets for gaming giants like EA on Xbox 360, PlayStation3, Nintendo Wii and other platforms. It has also started developing its own gaming content in co-production with Method Films.

With over 1,400 high-end CGI and 3-D artists and programmers on the payroll, and with an additional 300 in training, it was a logical step for DQE to diversify into high-end 3-D and mobile game asset development.

"We utilize almost 90% of our existing feature-quality 3-D expertise and resources for next-generation game asset development and cinematics," comments Vishal Dudeja, VP of operations for the division. "There is a lot of synergy, and now we are further boosting our capacity to add uwp to 1,000 employees to this division by middle of next year."

www.dqentertainment.com



Creating images that move to the Rythm of Life

## India's Talent for Toons sponsored supplement:



SKYLAND-DQ Entertainment Ltd.

production company. A number of Method Films' properties, including CGI TV films Jet Groove, Skyland and Les Gnoufs, are currently in production in DQE's facilities.

Employing more than 2,800 workers, DQE is by

far India's largest animation and gaming asset production company, handling a substantial volume of 3-D/CGI, 2-D, Flash and gaming productions each year.

## Kahani Inc.: A touch of India

Inspired by the success of Indian content on the international stage and the potential of Indian and Canadian animation to leverage this, three years ago a group of visionary businessmen in Canada spearheaded a venture to develop Indian-themed children's animation for the global market. Their company, Kahani Inc., draws on themes relevant to the Asian world that hold universal appeal. The company's premise is that just like African-American hip-hop music and Japanese animated cartoons, Indian themes can break out of their niche and charm mainstream America.

A classic three-wheel auto rickshaw, a family of geckos and a nerdy IT superhero are the central characters in the company's first three DVD movies. However, the films are decidedly international in nature. The team behind the project includes award-winning Canadian writers, one of whom has never even been to India. Voices are done in a neutral or North Atlantic accent.

The target market for the debut pieces is North America, where distributors have already shown interest. Kahani is also hoping to develop the properties as multi-platform brands. "The DVD is the first calling card," says company president and CEO Biren Ghose, a veteran of the Indian animation market and brand builder by calling. He was brought on board to run the company in 2005, and currently divides his time between the company's headquarters and development lab in Toronto, its office in Mumbai and visits to other markets and partner studios.



CODERMAN-Kahani Inc.





RAJU AND HIS AUTORICKSHAW FRIENDS-Kahani Inc.

Development, pre-production and post-production are handled out of Canada, and the production is done in India, often through co-production deals with local studios. For its first three films, Kahani partnered with Nipuna in India, Aten Works in the U.S. and J2K in Toronto.

While the effort is obviously to fashion a product with global appeal, Ghose is betting Kahani's Indian-themed ventures will readily attract Indian studio partners. "Would Indian studios rather own something that is French or something that has potential in their own market?" he asks. "In Kahani they can work on themes that can go from the platonic to the iconic—a very long journey in the media world." •

## Kahani: Raju the Rickshaw

There's Thomas the Tank Engine, Jay Jay the Jet Plane and Bob the Builder. Now joining the host of iconic toon characters is Raju the Rickshaw.

"Why couldn't the next pre-school automotive show be a vehicle taken from the Indian landscape?" says Biren Ghose, president and CEO of Kahani Inc., the company spearheading the 52 x seven-minute Raju the Rickshaw series already in production with a seven-story DVD.

"The vehicles in these shows are just means to transport kids into their own adventure, which takes off in many directions beyond the story," says Ghose. "Every kid that ever sat in one loves it and most kids in the world learn to ride on three wheels anyway!"

Raju the Rickshaw is one of three Indian-themed children's films currently being developed and launched by Kahani Inc. for the global market. The two other animated features are Chipkali World, highlighting the adventures of a family of house lizards known as chipkalis or geckos, and Coder Man, about a techie specialist using science smarts to save the day. Individually, the movies target three key age groups—preschoolers, six- to tenyear-olds and eight-to 14-year-olds.

All three are set for release at the end of the first quarter of 2007, in time for the North American holiday season. The final launch date will be determined by distributors.

www.kahaniworld.com

**Raiu The Rickshaw** 



Over time, tractors, cars, jet planes and engines have enthralled preschoolers! The "magic" of an autorickshaw has always been the delight of every kid who ever had the good fortune to ride in one of them! Raju and his "rickshaw' friends intend to take kids across the world to experiences and adventures in "Funpur"!

Raju the Rickshaw, premiering in 2007, comprises an ongoing series of 7 minute episodes, which exemplifies Kahani's mission to create a new paradigm in animation content which features contemporary Indian characters and settings written for the global market.

Kahani which literally means "the story", is partnering with a network of creators, producers, studios and allied media entities in gaming and new media to create, produce and distribute these brands across a variety of delivery formats. Raju is being coproduced with J2K in Canada.

Kahani is a privately held company with its headquarters in Toronto, Canada.

Contact birenghose@hotmail.com or at +91 9342524736 Address: 163, Lyndhurst Drive, Thornhill, Ontario LT 6T7 CANADA



# **CODER MAN**

In the age of gadgetry and technology what a super hero needs is a clever mind and a tech savvy disposition! The strong super hero and the savvy kids that accompany "dad" on his missions is a riot of modern action and adventure using convergence technologies as arsenal, Kahani's "Coder Man" exemplifies that the IT world can enable a super hero of tomorrow to be as iconic as any from vestervear and give the audience a more contemporary "relationship" with such a genre! Coder Man uses IT and native intelligence as primary weapons in his fight against crime and the "baddies" to save the

world.



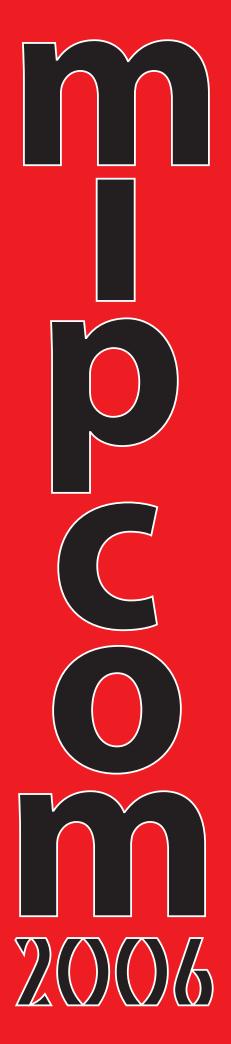
Coder Man previewing in 2007, exemplifies Kahani's philosophy of crafting quality animation brands through stories with an exotic "eastern" theme and serving them in a variety of media to connect with the 7 to 14 age group of global kids!

Kahani a Toronto, Canada based company works with an "eco-system" of coproducers, writers and creators who collaborate with Kahani in developing, producing and distributing its brands like Coderman.

Contact birenghose@hotmail.com or at +919342524736 Address: 163, Lyndhurst Drive, Thornhill, Ontario LT 6T7 CANADA









# MADE IN JAPAN PRODUCED GLOBALLY

# Anime houses open up to copro partners

by lianne stewart

id culture is going increasingly global. You need only look at the girls in Japan slipping on their American-style cowboy boots, and the boys scouring local bookshops for the latest translated manga in the U.S. to see kids fashion, entertainment and general pop culture references melding into a cross-Pacific hybrid. So it's no wonder western industry giants such as Cartoon Network and Nickelodeon are becoming more interested in co-producing with Japanese-based animation and advertising agencies to create a new breed of programming designed to work across all continents.

The West's relationship with toons produced in Japan is in fact changing, moving from the pure import model established during the first wave of anime-mania in the late '90s, to one involving more co-productions. So we thought it was time to assess the landscape, look at some of the players in this nascent field and the opportunities and challenges inherent in breaking new ground.

## **U.S. nets board copro train**

Cartoon Network dipped its toe into the cross-cultural production waters early, giving the go ahead to Toei Animation and partner Aniplex to produce a Japanese version of the PowerPuff Girls in early 2005. The resulting Demashita! PowerPuff Girls Z took to TV Tokyo airwaves this past July and is awaiting a North American debut. To follow up, CN recently set up a production division in Japan to create more cross-cultural fare. Meanwhile, Nickelodeon made announcements at Tokyo Anime Fair last spring about deals to create series with two different Japanese production houses. And not to be left out,

Oban Star Racers to air this year. The series, several years in the making, taps into the country's rich animation history to illustrate a Euro idea from Paris, France's Sav! the World prodco.

Canada's Cookie Jar Entertainment has also been active.

series follows 13-year-old Hunter as he uncovers a hidden world, all the while continually trying to stave off potential attacks from giant mutant insects. The series is gaining traction in North America, with approximately 700,000 kids registering to play the *Spider Riders* on-line game since the series' launch.

And it soon won't be the only Canadian-Japanese copro, with Toronto's Nelvana and toy company Spin Master joining forces with Sega Toys, TMS Animation and Japan Vistec to create a series based on the upcoming toy, Bakugan. It's about a boy and his friends who use their Bakugan Brawlers to ultimately save Earth from destruction. The 52 x half hour program, set to make its launch at MIPCOM, is rendered in 2-D and projected to be delivered by spring 2007. However, the partners insist it's not a glorified toy commercial. Even though broadcast deals in Japan involve producers paying TV advertisers to place their programs on sponsored blocks, Doug Murphy, president of Nelvana Enterprises, says the show is about strong character and story elements.

CN got into Japanese copros with *Demashita! PowerPuff Girls Z*, reversioning one of its first hit shows



New series *Spider Riders* began appearing on international schedules including those of Canada's Teletoon and the Kids WB! in the U.S. this past March. Financed and developed in partnership with Japanese advertising agency Yumiko and toonhouse Bee Train, it's the first Canadian/Japanese co-production to hit the airwaves so far. The

## Thirst for anime quenched

Of course, many of these relationships between international broadcasters and Japanese producers began about seven years ago, when Western networks were clamoring for anime to put on their skeds. With the likes of *Pokémon* and *Dragonball Z* capturing kids imaginations and pocket books across the globe, the floodgates opened and Western broadcasters began sniffing around for anything—old or new—to put on air. Realizing they could capitalize on this global trend, studios in Tokyo started working overtime to create new anime to sate the appetites of broadcasters and audiences alike.

But Toper Taylor, president and COO at Cookie Jar, says as quickly as Japanese programming flooded Western schedules, the well of bigNEW SEASON 26 X 13'+ FIRST SEASON OF 26 X 13' Discover the new season in HD SPARKLING\*

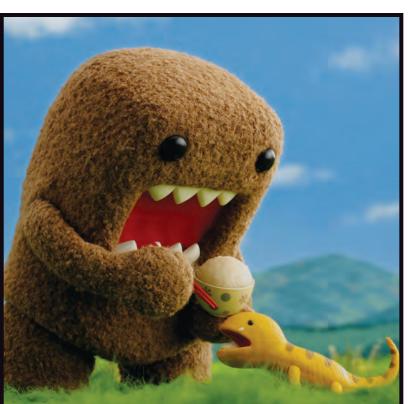
name anime dried up. While the industry in Japan expanded at a rapid clip over the past seven years to supply Western demand, he says it's now going through a natural calming period. "One of the key reasons Japan is so keen on co-production now is the appetite from Western broadcasters for anime has diminished dramatically," he says. From a trend perspective, he says kids are still happy to watch Japanese-inspired programming, but the industry feels the genre is on the downside of the

number of co-productions emerging from Japan. "I don't think the country's any more open to it than it was before," he says. But VP and general manager at Nickelodeon Japan Ed Wells disagrees. He says Japan is opening up to several regions, not just the West for international co-production opps and points to blossoming relationships between Japan and Singapore, Korea, China and India as evidence. "Western companies are still at the top of the list just because of the market size," he says. "It's the biggest market in the world."

And despite a worldwide slowdown in

And despite a worldwide slowdown in acquisitions on the horizon, it's not the only reason Japanese animation companies are looking beyond their border to create new series. The fact is the local production landscape has changed quite a bit in the last few years as well. In the past, Japanese producers had enough money and interest in anime to sustain themselves without having to forge international partnerships—but not any more.

For starters, the kids population in the region is flat or declining. Twenty years ago, Japan could have easily supported a fully animated series and local toy launch, but with a shrinking kids population, Spin Master's CEO Ronnen Harary says there is an increased interest in leveraging costs internationally. At the same time, more animation is being produced, while terrestrial free-to-air slot availability is on the wane. "Given the cost of creating these animations and the opportunities on terrestrial to recoup these costs, Japanese companies are definitely opening up to the international market," Wells explains.



NHK interstitial character DomoKun will be starring in a full series thanks to Nickelodeon's interest in tapping Japan's creative well

bell curve. "Only the best animation companies will survive, and it will be fascinating to see how this Japanese industry reacts to the slow down."

Although Nelvana's Murphy agrees international broadcasters are less enamored with anime right now, he doesn't necessarily see an increased

## **Putting the pieces together**

Put it all together and you have a creative industry seemingly more interested in working with Western partners to keep anime on air in any part of the globe wanting to broadcast the genre. And it's why Cartoon Network opened up its production studio in Japan. VP of business operation at CN Mark Norman says Japanese companies are actively searching for partners because they've got a very tough market. "With 50 to 80 shows coming out in any given year, it's difficult to break through, so we can give [a series] exposure in the U.S., Latin America and Europe to make it happen," he says.

Nickelodeon has two programs in development with IP that originated in Japan. National broadcaster NHK's interstitial character, Domo-Kun will be the first to get a series treatment.

# COMING SOON FROM LION KING DIRECTOR ROB MINKOFF

THE ADVENTURES OF

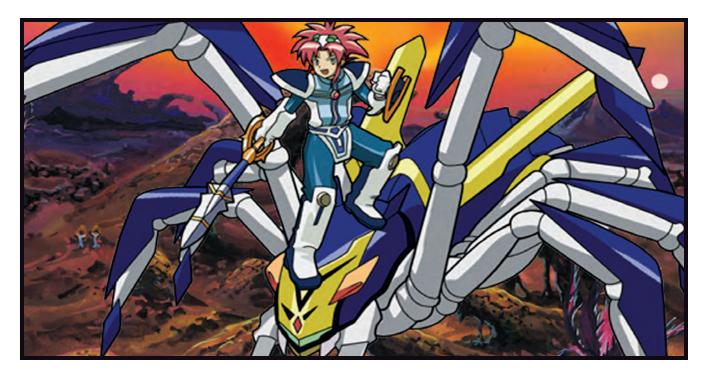
# HIPPO-THOPP



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A Cinemation/RDF Television Coproduction



Canuck crossover: Cookie
Jar's Spider
Riders was
financed and
developed in
partnership
with ad agency
Yumiko

The series starring the rectangular stop-motion monster is currently in production for a launch on Nicktoons next year.

The second co-pro with Polygon Pictures is in the early stages of development. Akihabara@Deep originated from a graphic novel and has a live-action incarnation targeting adults on terrestrial airwaves in Japan. Wells says the toon treatment is the next logical step for the property. At this stage Polygon has been willing to change a few key elements from its original concept to make it work outside of Japan. For example, the prodco is working with Nick to skew the demo down from teen/adult to tween.

Additionally, Nina Hahn, VP of inter-

national development at Nick, says she sees Asian production being driven by strong artwork and less so by powerful storytelling, providing more opportunities to shape the work. She feels Nickelodeon can help Japanese-created ideas by crafting the scripts to make them more internationally acceptable. "It becomes a good match between what the East does well and what the West does well, so it's been easy for us to come together and fulfill a vision of the project," she says.

For his part, Wells believes getting the story right for export on these copros is where Western companies should spend their energy. "I'm less interested in watering down the Japanese aesthetic to feel more palatable to the U.S., because

the animation is successful in its current form around the world," he explains.

## DO's and don'ts

Not surprisingly then, the key to making a co-pro with Japan work is to join forces at the earliest phase of the project, rather than follow the tradition of repurposing a finished show for North American and European audiences. Wells notes international companies used to balk at working with Japanese outfits because of the strict system in place for producing animation, but both sides seem to be more flexible these days.

Hammering out production deals takes a long time no matter if the company is from Japan or from down the street, however, there are still differences that producers looking to partner up with companies in Japan should keep top of mind. The companies interviewed in this story stressed the importance of building a trusting relationship with Japanese production houses, for starters.

CN's Norman says for a while, his team tried to set up deals with Japanese partners using the American format, but it has subsequently come around to following the established business model set for anime production in Japan. So each partner can exploit a certain right, but all of the money earned goes into one pot and is shared by all investors. "There's a lot to be said for how the consortium model works because everybody has a stake in the success in all markets, not just theirs," he says.

Meet the Owl...
A magnet for disaster!

52 x 1' hilarious new shorts



On the creative side, Michael Lekes, senior VP of programming at Jetix Europe, feels there is some resistance on the part of Japanese artists to adjust to international co-production conditions. "I do think there's a willingness to meet in the middle commercially, but creatively, I'm not sure," he says. "They've never had to work with foreign partners before."

And Cookie Jar's Taylor says

once a series goes into production, it's very difficult to steer the ship in a new direction, and this is where it becomes apparent how important it is to get involved at the earliest stage of development. "It's all about mapping out episodes from the very beginning—the story arcs, the action sequences and the expectations—in the greatest detail possible before principle animation begins," he warns.

The reason is simply based on the traditional way Japanese animation tells a story. For example, it can take up to six episodes to introduce the main character in some anime series.

Jocelyn Hamilton, VP of production at Nelvana, is working with five partners on *Bakugan*, and says foregoing e-mail exchanges for in-person meetings is the best way to work with Japanese partners. The artists are willing to change a fair bit of an original idea, such as picking up the pace of a plotline, just as long as the adjustments happen early in the production stage.

In the past, production companies in Japan felt the creative couldn't change, but now it's more of an insult to cut things out after they've been done (such as repurposing) as opposed to discussing issues up front. Hamilton says the director is very much in control of the show's vision, and the artists respect that integrity. "And that's why it's important to discuss things early, when the director can sometimes come up with better ideas," she says.

Once these elements are in place, western producers agree the process is speedy. In Japan, there isn't a layout department, and a design

department, or storyboarding—a production only involves a handful of key talent from beginning to end. "They cut out certain parts of the process that we in North America tend to focus on, like animatics," Hamilton says.

## Risk and reward split 50/50

It's clear why Japanese companies are looking outward, but why are Western players now willing to make concessions to get a trans-Pacific co-pro off the ground—particularly when international broadcasters are less inclined to pick up anime, and the Japanese market is stagnant?

Despite the drop in the number of kids, topname worldwide broadcasters and producers continue to eye Japan as a potential market. "You've still got 120 million people there, and that's a lot of kids," Spin Master's Harary says.

There's also the benefit of not having to go through the trouble of repurposing a show to modify it for a localized audience. Harary says everyone can now bring their best assets to the table early, and also have the opportunity to split the risk and share the rewards. "If you use each other's strengths, you can create magic," he says.

Spin Master wanted to work with Japanese partners to enhance the Bakugan toy's game play and characteristics. But it was thanks to the Canadian toyco's dealings with Sega that the toy emerged with a backstory suitable for TV treatment. "It's a very collaborative approach with the stories and the character development. We're working together to use their knowledge of the Asian markets to ensure the show suits a worldwide market," he says.

As for the suggested drop in broadcaster interest? Anime still plays on top international schedules, but with these new hybrids western partners have the chance to make the series more palatable for international acquisitions execs from the get-go; there's no need to repurpose the shows to suit Western kids' sensibilities. For example, Cookie Jar's Taylor says broadcasters are asking for comedy, but Japanese-produced funnies don't necessarily translate well to North American audiences—especially to kids. Here's where Western companies can inject their own humor early on in the scripting stage.

On the flipside, Wells, who is based in Tokyo, says there is still a tremendous potential in Japan for animated series. "There are fewer kids per family, but we've noticed a trend where there's a lot more spending on each child." He adds the situation is creating a short-term opportunity that will help establish his brands in the region long term. \stacksquare

Bakugan partner
Spin Master turned
to Sega Toys to help
craft a better
plaything and
found a backstory
so rich it pitched
the idea to Nelvana



## **Broadcast Sales Contacts:**

Kevin Gillis, Executive Producer Ira Levy, Executive Producer

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# COOLETS hows!



# **Derby Girls**

STYLE: 2-D

FORMAT: 52 x 11 minutes

**DEMO:** six to 11

**BUDGET:** Approximately US\$250,000 per

half hour

**STATUS:** The series is in the early stages of development, and Eat Your Lunch's Dave Skwarczek is currently working through co-production offers from companies in the U.S., Canada and India

**DELIVERY: Q2 2008** 

PRODUCER: La Grange, Illinois' Eat Your Lunch

**PREMISE:** Any grownup will tell you there's more to sweet girls than meets the eye, and Eat Your Lunch explores the darker side of the fairer sex in its latest toon. Three very polite and kind young girls happily follow their school's strict rules, but they can't suppress their inner desire for speed, battle and competition for long. When the bell rings at the end of the day, the Derby Girls exchange their saddle shoes for roller skates and become hard-skating roller derby competitors.

The show plays on the retro fun and the independent girl power vibe of the sport, and subverts the animation's Golden Book-like gentle imagery with the addition of some ridiculous looking enemies who continually plot dirty tricks to play on the girls. In many episodes, the girls face teams of non-human foes such as aliens and monkeys. In one script, rival team Fox Trot concocts an evil scheme to finally beat its biggest rival, the Derby Girls. Super rich Fox Trot calls in four ex-circus chimps to join the team and trounce the Girls. These well-trained primates have the roller skills, but the Coach's birthday cake is also at the rink and may prove too great a temptation for the chimps, hindering their ability to compete. Further complicating things is that the Derby Girls' toughest member goes ape for the animals, wanting more to play with them than compete against them. Fortunately, her teammates pull it together to win the match, and the chimps become so desperate for cake that they ransack the local bakery and stick Fox Trot with the bill.



# Zoopatroop

STYLE: 2-D

FORMAT: 52 x 12 minutes

**DEMO:** three to six, with a boy skew **BUDGET:** approximately US\$10 million **STATUS:** Not yet greenlit, but several U.K.

broadcasters have shown interest.

**DELIVERY:** Q2 2008

PRODUCER: London, England's HIT Entertainment

**PREMISE:** Young community policeman Zak has a real passion for his job. Working with fellow Zoopatroopers Sarge, Dee and T-Roy (and the young viewers at home), he helps keep Zoopaville a safe and happy place to live.

In each episode, the alarm sounds and Zak races off on his super-cool, multi-functional motorbike, the Zoopazoom One (or ZZ1, for short). Meanwhile, Dee hovers overhead in her nifty air-sea helicopter ZZ2. And if the going gets rough, T-Roy deploys ZZ3—a service vehicle used to transport a bunch of neat gadgets.

Storylines are still being hammered out, but some ideas include Zak helping out a city worker who starts to use an untested ZoopaScooper supersucking street cleaner; and Zak discovering he has a fan who is setting off false alarms around the city just to see the Zoopatrooper in action.

## Monster Buster Club

**STYLE:** CGI

FORMAT: 52 half hours

**DEMO:** six to 11

**BUDGET:** US\$20 million **STATUS:** In production **DELIVERY:** Q3 2007



**PREMISE:** Paris, France's Marathon with Jetix Europe, TF1, and Canada's Mystery Animation in association with YTV **PREMISE:** Sure, most of us wouldn't trust tweens with saving humanity, but you haven't met Monster Buster Club. The five 10-year-olds charged with saving their town from alien invasion are the only ones who happen to know about the unwelcome visitors. Operating via a network of secret underground tunnels beneath the town, the heroes carry out their plans to hunt down the invaders, while also getting their math homework done and trying not to drive each other batty.

In one action-filled ep, the group looks after a monarch, who just happens to resemble a pretty flower. King Petalia, however, is a powerful guy with many enemies throughout the galaxy, including some nasty robots that land on earth looking to practice their hedge-clipping skills. MBC uses its computer-inspired weaponry such as the Bubblenet gun to fight off the Clipper Bots, but Petalia ends up MIA. It turns out Jeremy, a lovelom and clueless MBC classmate, unwittingly helps King P escape harm. Near the ep's end, a female member of MBC opens her locker to find a love poem and present from Jeremy—a talking flower that turns out to be the mighty King Petalia himself.



**PRODUCERS:** Vancouver, Canada's Nerd Corps

**PREMISE:** Never mind the good guys—*League of Evil* is all about rooting for the villains. This band of four super bad guys has set its sights on global domination, which would be frightening if the band of evil-doers was in any way competent. Self proclaimed evil genius and leader, the Great Voltar has grand schemes to rule the world, but his sweeping plans are curtailed by a pretty tight budget. And to top it off, his partners in crime include a once-great mad scientist, a fella who embodies the spirit of a hyperactive Neanderthal toddler, and Red Menace, a former Soviet super villain who's now just as content in his role as a stay-at-home dad.

In one episode, the Great Voltar purchases an ultra-cool, much-coveted Japanese robot (the '89 Bipedal Shuriken Typhoon Super S Atomic Death model, of course). But while he's showing off his awesome new toy, Voltar inadvertently starts destroying everything in his path. Competing villainous team (and part time sushi chefs) Force Fighters V soon gets word and trots out its own 'bot. After a needlessly long transformation sequence, complete with annoying but triumphant theme music, the Force Fighters challenge Voltar and his team to a robot-a-robot battle. But both villainous groups forget to fuel up their robots, so the confrontation ensues at a nearby gas station. Neither side can figure out how to make the hose reach gas tanks stationed 200 feet up, and their various misguided attempts culminate with a huge explosion. Both 'bots get fried, leaving the League of Evil to skulk off to the team vehicle—Red Menace's family minivan.

# League of Evil

**STYLE:** CGI with 2-D **FORMAT:** 26 half hours **DEMO:** eight to 12

**BUDGET:** U\$\$300,000 to U\$\$350,000 per episode

**STATUS:** It's in development, with a completed bible and first few scripts on deck. Nerd Corps is in discussions with Canadian and U.S. broadcasters.

**DELIVERY: 2008** 

# **Reality!**

**STYLE**: live action **FORMAT**: 26 half hours **DEMO**: eight to 12

**BUDGET:** approximately

US\$2.3 million

**STATUS:** It's in development now, and Kick is seeking presales, distribution and partners interested in format rights.

omidt ngno.

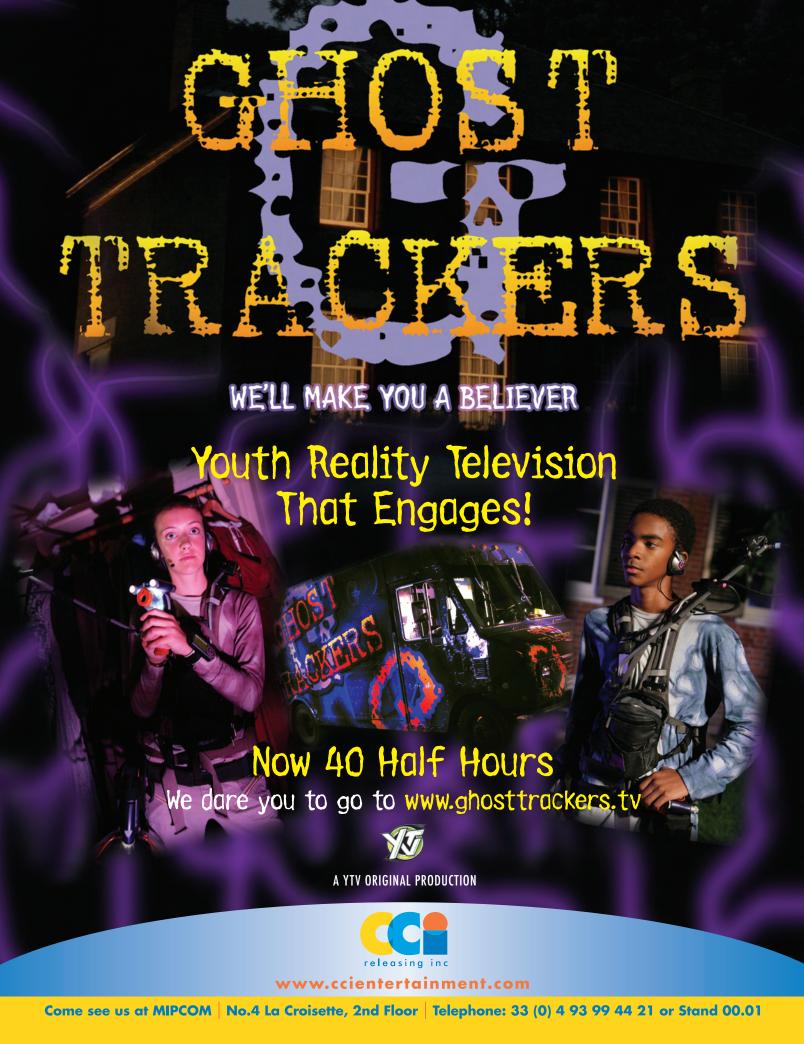
**DELIVERY:** Q3 2007

**PRODUCERS:** Victoria, Australia's Kick Productions

**PREMISE:** What tween doesn't live and breathe reality TV? Well, the Barker family wins an opportunity to star in their very own reality series in this new sitcom. Father Phil still lives in the '70s and thinks he's über cool, much to the embarrassment of his three kids: 16-year-old vanity case Amanda, tomboy Jessica who's 13, and trouble-making 10-year-old Jimi. Trustworthy mom Christine attempts to keep the family looking good for the cameras, but Grandma, who lives in her trailer in the backyard, is always ready to stoke the mayhem fire.

In one script currently being hammered out, daughter Jess is so tired of being portrayed as a crazy family in front of the entire world, she orchestrates some normal family moments for the TV crew. A nice, civilized dinner should be just the ticket to showing everyone the family's relaxed and unremarkable home life, but, of course, things don't go according to plan. At the dinner table, dad suggests a family sing-along; big sis Amanda won't stop listening to her headphones and younger brother Jimi refuses to take off his new night-vision glasses. And mom is no help since she didn't get her coffee that morning.

It's all normal behavior for them, but it's Jess who's acting like a freak for the cameras. She tries to start stilted and polite conversations, has a constant fake smile and pre-empts every potentially embarrassing moment with a loud joke or an abrupt change of subject. Finally, her big plans go completely off the rails when uncomfortable tummy rumbles hit the microphones revealing she's accidentally given her family food poisoning!







**DEMO:** eight to 12, with a special appeal for girls **BUDGET:** approximately US\$350,000 per episode

**STATUS:** The series is still in development, but French presale partners M6 and

Disney France are onboard.

**DELIVERY:** Q3 2007



**PREMISE:** Adapted from a series of comic books by Julien Neel, *Lou* tells the tale of an 11-year-old modern girl just looking to catch a break. She's desperate to distance herself from the nerd-vibe her video game-addicted, science fiction-writing mother gives off. But Lou's growing up in a single parent household, so getting away from geeky mom is not as easy as she had hoped it would be.

Living in an apartment building filled with many interesting characters helps the tween protagonist find fodder for her personal diary. She's also madly in love with Tristan, the boy across the way, and wants to set her mother up with newcomer to the building, Richard. But just as her 12th birthday approaches, things go a little crazy in one episode. She decides to take a big step and do something about her love for Tristan. When she sees him caring for a puppy, she figures a dog could help her break the ice. She offers to walk her neighbor's Great Dane, and quickly becomes mortified at the sight of the huge canine eating Tristan's soccer ball as he looks on. Not even a visit to her fave music shop will calm her nerves and help her get over the horror. In fact, it gets worse when Lou's crush catches her belting out a song while attached to headphones at the store. Her big plans to make 12 an important year are about to fall flat, until she decides to pull herself up by the bootstraps and tells Tristan that she thinks he's cute.

## **Huntik**

**STYLE:** 2-D/ CGI

**FORMAT:** 26 x 20 minutes **DEMO:** boys eight to 12

**STATUS:** Rainbow and Bocca will be scouting for presale partners at MIPCOM.

**DELIVERY:** Q1 2008

PRODUCERS: Loreto, Italy's Rainbow and Ireland's Big Bocca

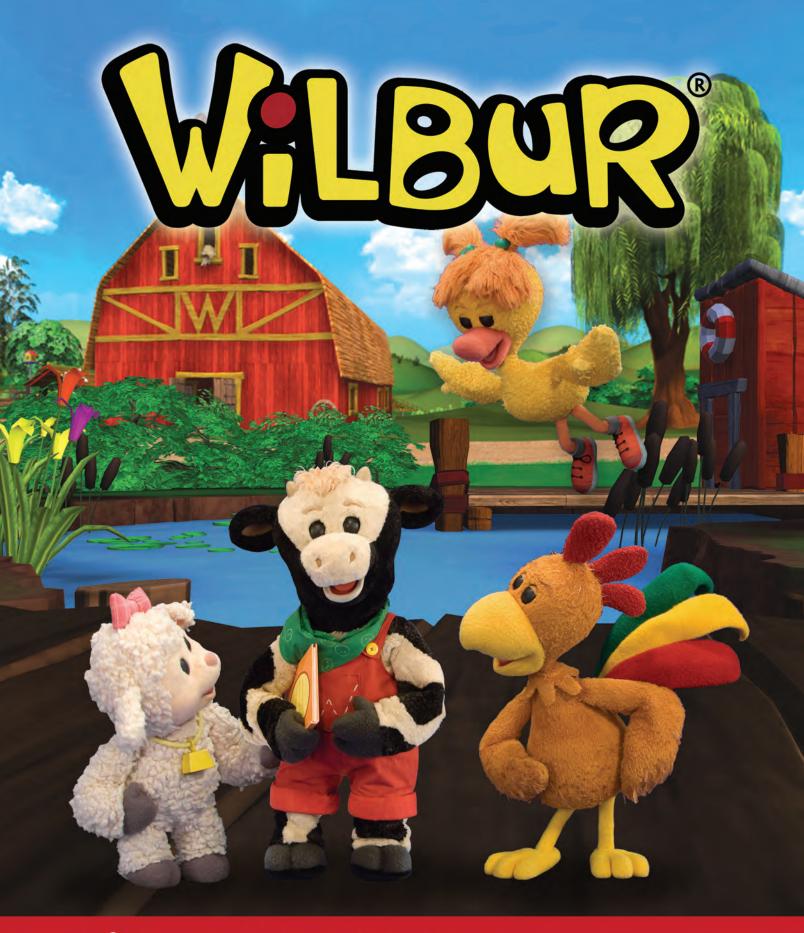
**PREMISE:** This time, *Winx Club* creator Rainbow and co-pro partner Big Bocca have their sights set on the tween boy market. *Huntik* puts a time-travelling, globe-trotting twist on the classic conflict of good versus

evil. The show's four protagonists, Dante, Lok, Sofia and Zhalia revisit classic legends such as the lost continent of Atlantis to collect powerful amulets from ancient civilizations that will help the group defeat its evil foe, The Organization.

The first episode sets the stage for the series, opening with Lok and Sofie accidentally breaking a statue that belonged to Lok's father in which they discover a hidden amulet and a journal. Before they can decide what to do with the objects, the dastardly Organization Suits set upon them and the pair are split up. The Suits chase Lok and Sofia down the backstreets and across the canals of Venice. Lok eventually escapes the Organization's clutches when he's able to unlock a spell in the amulet that gives him the power to out-run and jump his would-be captors. Unfortunately, the journal gets damaged during the adventure, leaving Lok and his pals to figure out how to fix it and further channel the powers it contains.

"CoolNewShows!" continued on page 111







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# Young Frankensteins

## Nets harness kid creator impulses and encourage expansion of user generated content

by gary rusak

the last 18 months the move from a push to a pull model of content delivery has been clipping along at break-neck speed. There's no need to rehash here how and why this generation of kids is growing up with the expectation that they'll be able to watch what

they want, where and whenever they choose to. However, there's a new wrinkle in this brave new digital kids entertainment landscape that merits a closer look, user generated content (UGC).

First there was social network myspace.com. A site populated entirely by personal homepages made largely by teens and young adults using little more than their digital cameras and a few clicks of the mouse. Even though it had no established revenue model, Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. snatched it up for US\$580 million on its promise of delivering the coveted youth demo. Now,

the heat has transferred to YouTube.com—a free, all-access site that relies entirely on user-uploaded (and often created) video clips. Unless you have been hanging out in the nether regions of Jupiter, you're aware the site currently sits at the top of the most trafficked worldwide. Recent stats indicate YouTube receives nearly 100-million unique hits every single day.

YouTube also has no definitive revenue model and arguably most of the content available violates every copyright law on the books. But the UGC on the site—particularly the fan vids featuring clips of a favorite show set to music or the reconfiguration

of a show's original plotlines or settings—betrays an intense connection with the material, the kind of connection most content/IP owners trip over themselves to create. So, right now most are faced with the conundrum: Do you prosecute for loss of potential revenue/copyright violations or do you unlock the vault, so to speak, and actively encourage the production of UGC?

If you're thinking the kids demo is a little to young to create UGC, think again. A few broadcasters, with the help of series producers, are attempting to get ahead of the curve on this one, realizing that their audiences are as techsavvy and trend aware as they get. It's early days yet, but what this first group has come up with is a way to encourage kid creation of UGC that continues to promote the linear channels and uses established ad-based revenue models.

### **PUBCASTERS WADE INTO UGC WATERS**

Kim Wilson, creative head for children & youth programming at CBC, is preparing to roll out a whole slew of programming centered on integrating UGC. The Canadian pubcaster is jumping in the UGC pool with both feet and a keen eye to keeping it accessible.

"I think the timing is right to take things to the next level," Wilson says. In November, CBC debuts My Goldfish Is Evil (a copro with Montreal's Sardine Productions) and The Secret World of Og (a copro with Helix Digital, Longshot Pictures, and Title Entertainment) on air and on its website. What's different is the site will have a digital tool box kids can use to create bumpers, interstitials, and shorts utilizing the characters and 2-D animation style of the shows. The best entries will be broadcast, and monthly challenges will reward kid creators for their work.



CBC is banking on UGC to attract kids to fall shows like *My Goldfish* is Evil

## mipcom 2006

Aiming to make it possible for anyone with access to a computer to create UGC, the juiced-up website will be a one-stop shop. "Not everyone has a cell phone, or access to a movie camera, but it doesn't matter because we have the on-line tool kit," Wilson says.

The goal, according to Wilson, is to get the audience involved with creating content around the shows, but at the same time, keep enough control over the assets and content to protect the franchises. Although the resulting UGC will be available through an on-line sharing site, it will still be vetted by CBC staff according to strict guidelines, ensuring undesirable content gets stripped from the site as soon as it appears.

"We have a clear policy about what kind of things we will do and what kind of things we won't," she says, adding that inapproriate language and violence are two things that will not be accepted.

On the other side of the world, pubcaster ABC Australia is doing something similar. Dan Fill, head of development for new media & digital services at ABC, lists five different UGC initiatives the company has embarked on in the last year. They include the launch of the Unearthed website in August which allows Australia's unsigned musicians to upload their music to a site where the youth audience then rates and tags its favorites. The bands with the biggest ratings will then be showcased on ABC's radio station Triple J. According to Fill, 60 bands uploaded their material during the first hour the site went live.

On the television side, ABC just completed its second season of *Rollercoaster Video Chat* based on the Rollercoaster TV block that targets kids seven years old and up and airs on both ABC TV and ABC2 weekday afternoons, and between 2:30 and 4 p.m. on Sundays. While it's not typical UGC where kids submit their own videos, they do get to shape the content of the on-air block. The *Chat* features an on-air host and usually a special guest. The host relates questions from the on-line audience directly to the guest.

Both examples illustrate the use of UGC to bolster traditional broadcast mediums of television or radio.

Fill, like Wilson, says vetting and controlling the content is an essential part of opening this door to the audience.

"If it is a text-based UGC that creates community engagement you need moderators," Fill says. "If it is images, video or music, you need extensive business affairs engagement followed by moderation."

Fill also stresses while UGC might seem like an inexpensive way for established broadcasters to pass the creative buck from professionals to amateurs, the necessary vetting process is, in fact, costly and intensive. Without an over-arching set of standards, Fill says, each case has to be carefully considered on its own merits, meaning "lots of time and energy goes into mounting UGC projects."

"It is important to try and sort through to find the best or most pertinent content," he says, adding that although there is no simple checklist for what the network wants out of the UGC, he is looking for "relevant, comprehensive and organized" content. "If this is set up incorrectly, what you end up with is a large collection of amateur-quality content, which is not really interesting to anyone," he concludes.

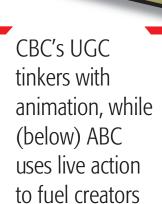
#### **PROVEN UGC SUCCESS**

Canada's CBC and Australia's ABC have shown necessary caution in entering the UGC arena; both have stringent controls and vetting processes. While ABC prefers to deal with material that is not copyrighted to avoid ownership issues altogether, CBC allows the copyrighted material from its shows to be manipulated, but ultimately controls what goes on the site and reaches the airwaves.

While both pubcasters have just started engaging with UGC to promote their traditional broadcast portals, Canada's 24/7 animation net Teletoon is blazing the trail with the Zimmer Twins.

Toronto-based production company zincRoe approached the network a couple of years ago with the idea of using animated characters Edgar and Eva in an interactive format. Teletoon jumped at the idea. The result is a zimmertwins.teletoon.com, which launched in March 2005, followed by a second run in July 2006. Visitors are given the opportunity to manipulate the title characters and create endings to shorts already produced by the network. With an eye to accessibility and user-friendliness, the audience can create the endings of the short films by inputting simple directions such as "run", "celebrate", "agree" and "disagree" into the on-line program. The Flash capability makes it possible for the users to manipulate approximately 80 different scenes.

"Young Frankensteins" continued on page 111





## mipcom 2006

## Pick your battles

## Protecting IP in the UGC age

hen it comes to user generated content (UGC), one of the stickiest issues can be summed up in two simple letters—IP. Fans of all ages, including computer-sawy kids, are happily at work manipulating and rearranging video clips and images of their favourite properties, and aren't taking time to get the owner's permission. A simple Google Video search on

SpongeBob SquarePants, for example, yields thousands of clips and related websites that repurpose the goofy icon in countless different ways. So what's an IP owner to do?

Certainly, it's natural for creators and companies to go to almost any lengths to protect the exploitation of their IPs. But the new reality of UGC means it's more difficult than ever to track down illegal usage and, at the risk of sounding heretical, stamping out these copyright violations might not be entirely desirable anymore.

London-based consulting firm Digital Outlook specializes in helping media com-

panies map out digital IP strategies and MD Jens Bachem has simple advice for current IP owners.

"Kids are going to do it anyway," he says. "The best way of protecting it is engaging them on it and positively supporting it."

It's advice that New York's Big Tent Entertainment seems to be following for new acquisition Domo, for which it holds worldwide licensing and broadcast rights. The brown, furry rectangular monster began life in 1998 in a series of stop-motion interstitials airing on Japan's pubcaster NHK. He's about to cross the Pacific in a half-hour series currently being co-produced by Nickelodeon (see "Made in Japan" p. 93 for details), but the creature with the fixed, open-mouth expression has already captured the imaginations of millions, becoming an emblem of the UGC era. A search

of Domo on YouTube.com yields more than 400 user-generated videos, ranging from a documentary on Domo at a dinner party to Domo dancing to pop songs.

Richard Maryyanek, VP of sales and marketing at Big Tent, manages the non-Japan rights to the property. He says there are more than 600 products and hundreds of thousands of websites dedicated to the character—precious few of which have been officially licensed.

"At Comic-Con there were people selling Domo stuff that wasn't necessarily licensed and we met them and we embraced them....There is a Domo game out there that that has more than a million downloads. And it probably breaks every copyright rule known to man," he notes. "But, it's a very difficult process—just tracking down who made it and how it was replicated would take up a lot of our resources."

Maryyanek says a litigious approach to protecting the copyright of a specific character would damage the overall brand in the long run. "There are two options with all these websites," he says. "We can embrace them or we can send out Cease and Desist letters. Our market is kitschy and creative, so we embrace it," he says. "We want people to create Domo content, but we also want them to admit that it is our copyright and our trademark."

As part of the process, Big Tent is currently in the early stages of creating "user friendly agreements" that will protect the intellectual copyright of Domo.

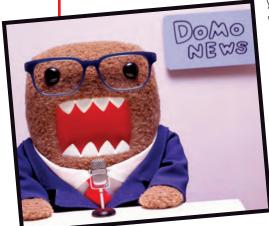
Admittedly, it is a tough balance to strike. Big Tent uses some manpower to police the plethora of websites to make sure content that runs contrary to the brand (mostly overtly offensive material) is taken off line, but in the end, Domo is subject to marketplace interpretation.

"The good stuff outweighs the bad," Maryyanek says. "We want them to be creative, we want to feed that."

To this end, Big Tent is creating an on-line multi-lingual Domo hub where content can be shared between users across the globe. Details of the site are still underwraps until it's launch next year, but Maryyanek says the company will provide users with an on-line tool box and digital assets of all shapes and sizes ideal for video manipulation and artistic rendering. (In addition, Big Tent will be rolling out mobile content in the near future.)

On the traditional broadcast side of things, Maryyanek also hinted that a "major association" between Big Tent and a predominant distributor will be announced this fall.

"If you don't do it, (the audience) will do it anyway," Bachem concludes. "If you listen to what kids are doing, you can properly engage with them," he says. "If you stick your head in the sand, then the quality of the stuff that gets out there will be poor." *GR* 



Domo has become an emblem of the UGC age, and one of the world's most repurposed properties

#### "Young Frankensteins" continued from page 109

For the first round that ended in the latter half of '05, the net chose the best clips and readied them for broadcast—turning speech bubbles into voices and crediting the kid creators. The spots, 60 from season one and 120 from season two, are currently used as one-minute interstitials and commercials that serve to promote the network and the production.

According to Teletoon's numbers, the Zimmer Twins website drew more than 195,000 unique visitors from across Canada

in July 2006 alone, hitting the nine- to 12-year-old demo the heaviest. The site has received more than 290,000 separate entries since the launch of season one, even crossing linguistic lines—39.8% of all entries were created in French.

Although Steve Szigeti, director of online media for Teletoon, deems the project an unqualified success, he says it is difficult to gauge whether the website ended up driving viewers to the linear net or not—ratings for one-minute spots are difficult to track. However, the site is sticky and is most likely engendering viewer loyalty. Creator Jason Krogh of zincRoe points out that a full 30% of visits to the Zimmer Twins site last for more than 10 minutes.

Krogh sees the project as a nice synthesis of UGC with the traditional creative process. "In our project we have animators, and writers, and we brainstorm ideas and then we add kids to that mix."





#### THE FUTURE

Like anything that can be described as a trend there is the possibility that UGC will just flare out, and that the audience will tire of watching their own material and demand more professional productions and something new. However, Jens Bachmen, managing director of London-based media strategy company Digital Outlook, doesn't see UGC as a traditional trend.

Taking it further, Bachmen believes that the advent of the active audience will change the way producers and broadcasters approach content. "The mindset will have to change from 'I'm pumping stuff out there' to 'what kind of choices can I help my audience make'," he says. \stacksquare.

"CoolNewShows!" continued from page 106

## **Bailey the Wonderdog**

**STYLE:** Flash animation **FORMAT:** 26 x 11 minutes **DEMO:** preschool

BUDGET: US\$235,000 per half hour

**STATUS:** Cuppa Coffee will be financing this show solely from presales, and broadcasters in Canada, U.S., U.K., Australia, France, Germany and Japan are being targeted. Deals are expected to close during MIPCOM this month.

**DELIVERY:** Q3 2007

**PRODUCERS:** Toronto, Canada's Cuppa Coffee

**PREMISE:** Lots of things seem big and overwhelming to a tiny preschooler, but these smallest TV viewers will have a friend to help them build the confidence

to ask questions and face new situations with enthusiasm. In real life, Bailey is Cuppa Coffee CEO Adam Shaheen's dog, but in this developing series Bailey the Wonder Dog is a hero who takes on daily life by putting his best paw forward. And when faced with challenges, he doesn't back down, choosing to take a more positive approach.

For example, in one episode, Bailey starts to dig a hole (as dogs are wont to do) just to find out where it ends. He recruits pals, Delores the action cat and Fred the show bird to help out, but the plan goes awry when each of them voices a different opinion on the best way to get the job done. Bailey digs in his paws, dismissing his friends to do it his way. Eventually, he burrows to such depths that he discovers the long-lost Kingdom of the Moles. Bailey is promptly crowned king. He laps up the attention at first, but soon finds himself growing tired of winning every game and receiving praise for no real reason, and realizes he misses his true friends and their viewpoints.



# MEET US AT MIPCOM



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## **HARD** TIMES

## Kids programming in the U.K. faces an uncertain future



by lianne stewart

here's no doubt that there are turbulent times ahead for commercial kids programming in the U.K. Not only is the region's broadcast and production community anxiously awaiting word on Ofcom's decision about junkfood advertising and on ITV's definitive

plans for its terrestrial kids programming, rumors that the BBC may be shuttering its kids block on BBC1 have also surfaced in recent weeks.

As the situation stood at press time, the one thing that has been established is CiTV's commissioning plans are on hold for the moment. Outgoing CiTV programming controller Estelle Hughes confirmed changes are coming as to how the network will generate funds, affecting the US\$35 million ITV currently spends in the independent community.



And as we noted in the September 2006 feature "Bracing for Battle", not all U.K. broadcasters foresee major cutbacks resulting from Ofcom's upcoming decision. Terrestrial net Five kids controller Nick Wilson says most of the broadcasters and the advertisers involved began enacting a form of self-regulation when these concerns about childhood obesity first started to bubble to the surface a few years ago. "A lot of the advertising revenue that will disappear under this new regulation has disappeared already," he says. That said, the full impact of the junkfood ad/ITV double whammy won't be realized until both organizations make their decisions public sometime this fall. In the meantime, the British nets are forging ahead with their new skeds.

#### **CHITY SOLDIERS ON**

Despite the bad news on the terrestrial side, it's business as usual at the new 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. diginet. For the younger set, a second season of co-pro *Pokoyo* bowed last month, along with



the costume-character show created by the minds behind the *Tweenies* and produced by Entertainment Rights called *Jim Jam and Sunny*. Hughes was drawn to the series because it provides "an intelligent look at play patterns, and how brothers and

A rare show in the preschool block is straight acquisition, Curious George. Hughes says it's not difficult to find strong series for this youngest set made locally, and she didn't think she'd ever acquire a show that wasn't U.K.-voiced. However, she says this series was too sweet to pass up. The toon also appears in the ITV terrestrial block.

Heading into the older kids blocks, Hughes was particularly chuffed about two new series. The first is the animated Horrid Henry (Novel Entertainment), based on the books that have proven quite successful in the U.K. She says one in three kids in the U.K. has Henry licensed merch already, and this show just adds to the brand. "It's been so fun to work on because he's so naughty. You really do laugh out loud," she says.

Little Princess:
The stubborn star should be a hit with preschoolers

The second series is a live actioner from Northern Ireland. From the production house behind *S Club, Bel's Boys* (Granada) follows the

adventures of a nine-year-old girl who ends up managing a boy band. Hughes points to the slick production style, quick 11-minute scripts and the addictive music as extra draws for kids' eyeballs. But it's also important that this 26-ep series comes from Northern Ireland, a production area Hughes says the U.K. has yet to fully tap.

#### SHAKE CHANCES UP ITS RECIPE ON FIVE

Terrestrial net Five tips the scales in Milkshake's favor this year, opting to focus its production funds on preschool programming while turning to acquisitions for its older-skewing Shake block. "In this multi-channel world, with a programming block that's only on two

days a week, it's difficult to maintain visibility," Wilson says. Five is sticking with Shake because of its public broadcasting commitment, but it didn't make sense to split production-spend equally between the two blocks; Milkshake has the most broadcasting hours and visibility.

That doesn't mean production levels are about to go down for Shake. Wilson wants to bump up the block's ratings, and will be on the lookout for live action, action-adventure and high-quality factual dramas to make up its weekend morning hours. On Saturdays, he's going for commercial acquisitions. On Sundays, action is the name of the game with shows such as *Hercules* and *Sinbad* in the lineup.

"The numbers wouldn't be bad if we were Disney or Jetix, but we're not happy with getting just over 150,000 [viewers]." Two years ago, these same programs would have brought in 400,000 sets of eyeballs per airing, Wilson says, adding the ever-splintering broadcast landscape, and lack of visibility are to blame.

But preschool block Milkshake is set to provide even more opportunities to grab viewers for the net. Five is launching two new digital channels in the middle of the month, and Wilson will oversee another six hours of preschool programming for the Milkshake block airing on Five Life. He'll initially cherrypick programs from his library to fill the sked and see how it goes.

As for the established 6 a.m. to 9 a.m. Milkshake block on Five's terrestrial channel, a number of new co-pros are set to bow. Wilson reckons the strong protagonist in TV Loonland's *Little Princess* will appeal to both young girls and boys equally. "She has a penchant

for digging in her heels to get her own way, which is what four- and five-year- olds are particularly good at," he says. Another potential hit comes by way of *Rupert the Bear*, which Wilson likens to *Noddy* in its new 3-D treatment—it's new to the wee ones and very familiar to their parents. "I think *Rupert* will be the preschool hit of this autumn," he says.

Looking ahead to 2007, Wilson says there are a number of shows on the horizon, including *The Beeps* produced with Brighton, U.K.'s Impossible Animation. Set to launch in January, the show is about a group of egg-like characters living on an island and learning about teamwork. Chapman's *Rory the Racing Car* will also bow this

spring for the youngest viewers.

### BBC RAISES THE AGE ON CHEEDIES TO HELP INTER OLDER PRESIDENCESS BRAND LOVAL

Michael Carrington, creative director for kids at the BBC, may be responsible for redefining the term tween. He's aging it down from the traditional 10 to 12 set and applying it to the five- to six-year-old demo. It seems kids falling into this age bracket were too old for the preschool shows on Cbeebies, but too young for CBBC. "They were looking for programming targeted to them, and started to go off to Boomerang. We weren't nurturing them," Carrington explains. Upon further examination, he reckoned the preschool net would be the best platform to serve these newschoolers. "We all know the problems in aging down—you alienate your older audience." And he didn't want to do that to CBBC viewers.



### THE MAGIC BEGINS SPRING 2007





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## Exotic appeal: Cheebies is betting Mama Mirabelle's Home Movies will strike a chord with animal lovers

To help kids bridge the gap between Cbeebies and CBBC, Carrington began scheduling series such as *Charlie and Lola*, *Lunar Jim* and *LazyTown* last year. Already, he says the five- and sixyear-olds are returning, particularly boys, which is helping the net achieve a more balanced gender skew. To keep momentum going, a new series called *Me Too!* from Scotland's Tattiemoon, will launch this autumn. From the producer of *Balamory*, it takes a parallel look at a day in the life of a preschooler and his/her parents, juxtaposing time spent at playschool with time spent at the workplace.

Of course, Cbeebies will still look to serve its youngest audiences, and set to debut early next year is National Geographic Kids' Entertainment's *Mama Mirabelle's Home Movies*. The series uses animated characters to introduce classic live-action scenes populated by exotic animals. Carrington says the series' warm and engaging characters will help preschoolers connect with live action, to which they're not normally drawn. "The fact that it's natural history is a bonus for me, and kids love animals, especially exotic ones," he says.

On the older-skewed CBBC, Carrington says the big launch in September was Collingwood O'Hare's *The Secret Show*. Pointing to the importance of comedy, he's certain seven- to 11-year-olds will giggle along to the adventures in what he calls this "Get Smart meets James Bond meets Austin Powers" series. Comedy is very important to keep the girls tuned in, while boys latch on to adventures peppered with laughs.

#### NICKELODEON STAYS ON COURSE

"It's so competitive in the U.K." Debbie MacDonald, VP and programming director, says. Although her cablenet is number one on digital as it enters its 13th year on air across the pond, it doesn't mean the Nickelodeon team is resting on its laurels. MacDonald admits a lot of the new series launching in autumn for kids six and up are programs already on the sked getting a refresh with new eps, such as *Genie in the House. Genie* is the first original production realized through Nickelodeon UK's piloting scheme, and it rocketed to the top of the cablenet's live-action offerings when it debuted in May. Another 13 eps are on the way, as well as the second season of Southern Star's *Sleepover Club* and 4Kids' Yu-Gi-Oh! GX (which MacDonald says is slightly funnier and skews younger than the brand's first incarnation).

For Nick Jr., Little Airplane's *Wonder Pets!* will bow this season, but with young British voices singing the operatic refrains of the lead characters. "It's a bit of a challenge, especially because the original show from the U.S. is so cute and gorgeous, and the U.S. voices are so outstanding, you don't want to lose that quality," she says. However, Nick Jr. reversions most of its shows simply because it's what mothers expect. "Preschoolers are just learning to read and speak, and they don't want their kids calling biscuits cookies," she says.

An acquisition that originally took MacDonald off guard is ABC Australia's *The Fairies*. "I'm going to get shot for saying this, but I'd describe it like the The Wiggles, but with fairies," she says. The music

and magical storyline will be a huge preschool draw, as well as the dancing Fairies and activities designed to get the kids off the couch.

Next season is already planned out, but Macdonald still has some shopping to do. Of particular interest is finding more preschool shows that encourage activity as well as "the next hot live-action comedy program" for Nick. Of course, MacDonald says it's difficult to be precise about what she's looking for because sometimes programs just come out of the blue. She points to *Fairies* as an example. "I wasn't sure if it would work, but then we saw an episode and we went for it."

### CARTOON NET BOOSTS ITS PRESCHOOL BLOCK

CNs four-channel remit, Toonami, Boomerang and Cartoon Network Too, has shifted in the past few months, with all of the supporting nets now working to complement main channel, Cartoon Network. Cartoon Network Too was the last to launch this past April and it's aiming to etch out its own identity by reaching TV's youngest viewers. The daily Cartoonito block takes on the challenge of getting preschoolers to both laugh and learn with acquisitions such as Fluffy Gardens (Monster Animation), Caillou (Cookie Jar) and Animal Stories (from Collingwood O'Hare and Foothill Entertainment). "We know there's huge competition, but there's this feeling we need to capture the youngest audience and introduce it to the brand," Cecelia Persson, VP of programming, acquisitions and presentation at Cartoon Network EMEA, says.

One twist that might set it apart from its many preschool competitors is Cartoonito's planned introduction of French language skills to the U.K.'s youngest set. CN's research found parents named French as the most desired second language for their kids. Channel interstitials will teach simple French phrases kids could use on the other side of the Chunnel. After the block ends at 3 p.m., the channel will shift gears and feature CN show staples such as Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends and Johnny Bravo.





For supporting net, Toonami, live actioner *Life* with *Derek* bows this autumn. It's a strategy Persson says helps clarify each channel's brand. Cartoon will continue to focus only on animation, while introducing live action on Toonami will help serve all kids' viewing habits.

At the mother ship, Cartoon Network UK is set to strip *Ben* 10 (which has been transmitting on the weekends over the summer), and Warner Bros.' goofball comedy *My Gym Partner is a Monkey*. Each program received a big two- to three-week lead in, which used on-line and on-air marketing to get the kids excited. Although she'd be happy to get more girls, Persson says this network is predominantly boy led and these shows should appeal to both genders thanks to their mix of humor and action.

"Hard Times" continued on page 127

## FALLTY 2

## **SHIFTING STRATEGIES**

Teutonic nets reshape the kids TV landscape for upcoming season

by lianne stewart

### NICK REACHES INTERNATIONALLY TO

Nickelodeon's re-entry into the German market a year ago set industry tongues a wagging, but the anticipated explosion onto the scene hasn't quite happened... yet. Ratings for the new free-to-air network aren't crushing top-rated Super RTL, and some German broadcasters have hinted other networks picked up more viewers when Nick launched than Nick did. The goal was to snag a 10% audience share within the year, but Markus Andorfer, VP of entertainment channels, would only say Nick is a top channel in the region along with Super RTL and Ki.Ka. And he's betting on its 360-degree programming for mobile, on-line and linear TV to keep the network ahead of the game.

# Battle of the Sponge: Newcomer NiCK and top kidsnet Super RTL are sharing Ratings Champ SpongeBob until 2009

Then there's the fact that Nick produces some of the highestrated shows airing in the country. "We're all terrestrial networks essentially, and all of the shows we bring to the German market will be exclusive to Nick," he says.

So, what about *SpongeBob SquarePants?* Andorfer says starting in November, episode 74, and those to follow, will be on Nick exclusively, despite Super RTL's licensing agreement that doesn't expire until 2009. "*SpongeBob* was Super RTL's number-one hit show and it didn't want to get out of the contract, so we aired



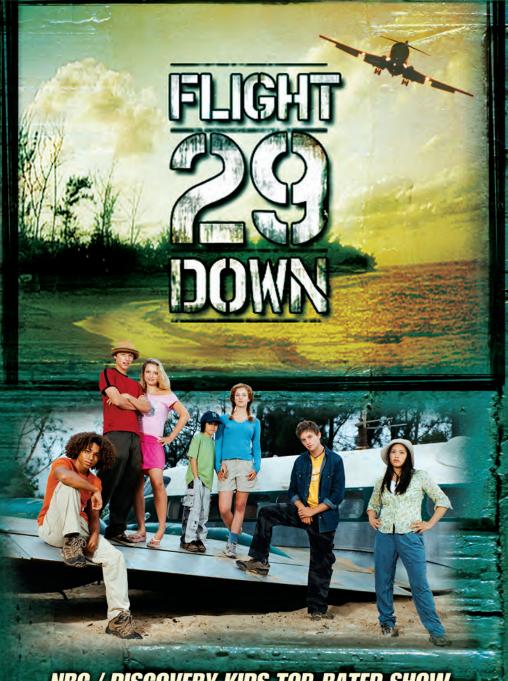


competitive, adding the schedule only overlaps with *SpongeBob* and fellow Nick production *Jimmy Neutron*.

For this season, Andorfer has reached out to international producers for new programming in addition to dipping into Nick's bag of in-house productions. For the preschool Nick Jr., which starts at 7:30 a.m., he's most excited about slotting Nelvana's *Miss Spider's Summy Patch Friends* in the latter end of the block. "We needed this kind of bridge programming for four- to eight-year-olds," he says. He thinks the tone of the program, which teaches tolerance and acceptance of different people, will speak to the viewers.

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For Nick's lunchtime block for nine- to 13-year-olds, Animation Collective's *Kappa Mikey* will come onboard. Andorfer is looking to package this Japanese-inspired comedy with *Avatar: The Last Airbender, Skyland* and *Danny Phantom* in the coming months because the series have similar qualities. "Very great production values, bright, colorful," he says.

As part of an overarching strategy, Andorfer is going to stagger the launches, with *Kappa* bowing in September, and *Avatar* following in November. He didn't want to bombard the sked with new content and risk alienating viewers who have just gotten familiar with the channel. "It's too dangerous, especially as we're up against Super RTL," he says. Counter-programming is also part of his weekday scheduling strategy. "Japanese animation is popular on RTL2 in the afternoons, so we go for a girl skew then," Andorfer says, noting, "but as a whole, we're gender balanced."

## Good PaLS: Super RTL is bringing in new eps of several proven faves like Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends

Looking forward to the 2007/2008 season, Andorfer says the shows will revolve around a group of protagonists rather than one person. "We're looking for a whole team—a group of best friends," he says. Such programs draw a broader audience and appeal to both genders equally. He points to Disney's *High School Musical* as an example of the type of show he'll have his eyes peeled for at MIPCOM.

### SUPER RITL STRYS ON TOP

When Nickelodeon entered the German market, pundits believed Super RTL had the most to lose. After all, it was the top-rated network for kids in the territory. Moreover, its most popular show was Nick flagship series <code>SpongeBob SquarePants</code>. Twelve months later, the network continues to top the charts with kids, but it doesn't mean Frank Dietz, head of acquisitions and co-production at Super RTL, thinks the trial is over. Nick entered the market just months before World Cup mania swept over the nation's kids, so come last June a lot of the young viewers were tuning into the soccer games rather



than their fave toons, which affected both broadcasters. Even then, Dietz says his network secured a 28% share of daytime, and some programs reached up to a 35% share.

So, if Dietz has adopted an "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" attitude, it's for good reason. Accordingly, the network has a truckload of new episodes of second and third seasons for established programming. Series such as *Totally Spies!*, *Kim Possible*, *Dragon Hunters*, *Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends* and *Bob the Builder* will return, as well as Montreal, Canada-based Cinegroup's *What's with Andy?*, which comes back to the network after a short absence caused by Jetix's withdrawal from the co-pro. Dietz scheduled the older episodes over the summer to lead up to its return.

As for new series set to debut, Super RTL's co-pro with Jetix, Sav! the World, France 3 and Bandai Visual, *Oban Star Racers*, will launch on the network with 26 episodes. The Japanese/Euro hybrid is both high-concept and quality, according to Dietz. "It was very ambitious and very intensive to produce," he says, adding he doesn't yet know if a second season will come to air.





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Off-air activity has been a focus for Dietz in the last few months, as well. The net launched an on-line community for teen and tween girls this summer called Element Girls. The site is divided into the four elements of fire, earth, wind and water and it's a safe environment where girls can chat with each other, learn personal skills such as how to handle conflict, and download music. So far, 60,000 girls have signed up. There's also a new download portal called toni.de that launched in July in conjunction with sister company Random House (also partially owned by Bertelsmann Group)—more than 700 audio books are currently available on the site.

As for 2007, Dietz is on the lookout for comedies with high-production values in the same vein as *Camp Lazlo* from Cartoon Network. "Action-comedy, cartoons with style, spirit and good storytelling. And slapstick always works for us," he says.

Whether any kids nets appear as a result has yet to be seen, but he's insistent that Ki.Ka will stay free-to-air in the digital era, as it may be an advantage to be available to a larger audience.

Although the network doesn't have an official fall season, a number of new series are set to bow in the coming months. Dark Oracle (Cookie Jar) and locally produced Great, Tom! (Minga Media Entertainment) will launch in September. Also scheduled to appear is the experimental docu-format Kids Power (from German producer Anaconda), where families switch roles—the kids go to their parents' workplaces and moms and dads return to school.

As for what's floating Debertin's boat most right now, he singles out *PicMe* (from Dublin, Ireland's Jam Media) and the long-awaited co-pro *Ugly Duckling and Me* (Futurikon, A Films Denmark and Magma Films). Ki.Ka secured the exclusive Ger-

# Exclusive Pick: Ki.Ka nabbed German rights for interactive series *PicMe*, in which KiD viewers get to become part of the ON-Screen action



### KILKA ENCOURAGES MORE INITERACTIVITY

Sebastian Debertin says a lot has changed in the German broadcasting landscape in the past few months, which he hopes will establish Ki.Ka as the top draw for German kids on free TV. Ki.Ka is wary of the increasing competition that's emerging on the new digital platform. Although it's not clear yet if German audiences will want to pay to watch channels, Debertin says both RTL Group (which owns RTL, RTL2, Super RTL, VOX and n-TV) and MTV Networks Germany will be launching encrypted channels on this new platform.

man rights for *PicMe*. And in addition to airing dubbed original version of the series, the network's opening up its mailbox to receive kids portraits that it can then insert into the series, truly making its viewers a part of the on-screen action.

Interactivity in all guises, in fact, is an important element for Debertin. He says the network acts more like a contact person for its audience. Viewers are continually encouraged to call, email, write and ask for help, advice and information. Formats such as *Kummerkasten* (*Agony Aunt*) and the call-in show *Ki.Ka Live* help solidify the role.

## **▎**┖▍┖,५┌\<sup></sup>╯/┋



### 72DF RAMPS UP ONHUNE PRESENCE

Interactivity is also a major strategy for ZDF's kids blocks. Arne Lohman, director of co-production and the interim kids commissioning editor, says the net's strategy this season is to become a real part of kids' lives. "We want to be their friends," he says, adding the net plans to do this by engaging viewers on-line, offering them behind-the-scenes scoops and educational tidbits on the website. For example, the series Wicked Science is

a live-action fiction series, but the ZDF website demonstrates scientific findings behind the experiments on the show.

The website is also being used to promote upcoming series. For example, content from preschool series such as the third season of *Dragon* appeared on the internet and as part of a live show that toured Germany's main railway stations this past summer before its TV debut. Laura's Star (ZDF), which launches with a Christmas special and more episodes in January 2007, also got the live show treatment this past summer that combined walk-on characters with snippets of the filmed footage.

For the older kids, ZDF has already greenlit the second series of H2O, about teen mermaids living on land and attending school (Jonathan M. Shiff/Southern Star) even though the first season won't launch until December. "We're convinced it will be very successful, and it helps that it's launching in the winter, when it's nice to see sunny beaches," he says. Toon-wise, Rainbow's Monster Allergy will make its debut, as well as Warner Bros.' Xiaolin Showdown, both of which have been picked up to attract more boys. Lohman says the net right now is skewed slightly female, and he's attempting to even out the gender split.

## RITLE EMBRACES ANIME TO

After a brief trial last year to get more girls watching, Andrea Lang, head of children's programming and animation at RTL 2, says the block is going back to its key boy target. Anime is the name of the game for this season. "We are always very strong in Japanese animation with sagas, ongoing storytelling and complicated, complex characters," she says. And Naruto (VIZ Media) should fit this bill. Lang has committed to airing 52 eps, stripping every weekday at 3:30 p.m., and if it meets

expectations, she's planning to pick up more. Promotion for the series started in August with on-air promotions and on-line contests sponsored by Nintendo. A special 10-minute DVD was also inserted into an issue of the block's dedicated kids magazine. Pokito.

The net is also gearing up for the 10th anniversary of block mainstay Pokémon and big promotions are in the works. Nintendo takes a partnering role in the celebration beginning at the end of this

> Boy POWer: RTL2 returns to an action-heavy sked with *Naruto*

> > month and leading into November. The net will debut a special episode to commemorate the birthday, and then launch the series' eighth season.

> > > Starting in October, Dragonball GT

takes a bow with back-to-back episodes. Lang will stunt the show after Naruto until December. "Dragonball Z was huge and the interest for the show is still there. It's always in the top five websites for kids," she says. There's also a first run of Shaman King (4Kids Entertainment) and Get Ed (Buena

For next year, Lang is looking to commit to programming earlier. Although she's not in a position to get onboard during the development stage, she'll consider taking on the risk after piloting. "We might be willing to buy from a script too, rather than waiting to see how it does on another channel," she says.

Vista/Disney).

### JETTEX LEANS ON HUMOR. AND FOCUSES ON NEW LAUNCHES

Changes are brewing at Jetix's weekend terrestrial block on Kabel 1 and its full digital channel. This season, the free TV block featuring series such as Super Robot Hyper Team Monkey Force Go is switching from Saturday to Sunday morning.

Over at the diginet, the network has taken a page from its sister net in the U.K. and launched a new after-school block, Jetix Max. Every few weeks, the first-run series appear-

> ing in this one hour segment will change themes, moving from action to humor and back. "It's basically another tool to get kids excited about the programming



## gRRL pOWer: Pucca lands a prime spot on Jetix

schedule, and it has the potential to push the brand on air," Stefan Kastenmueller, managing director at Jetix, says.

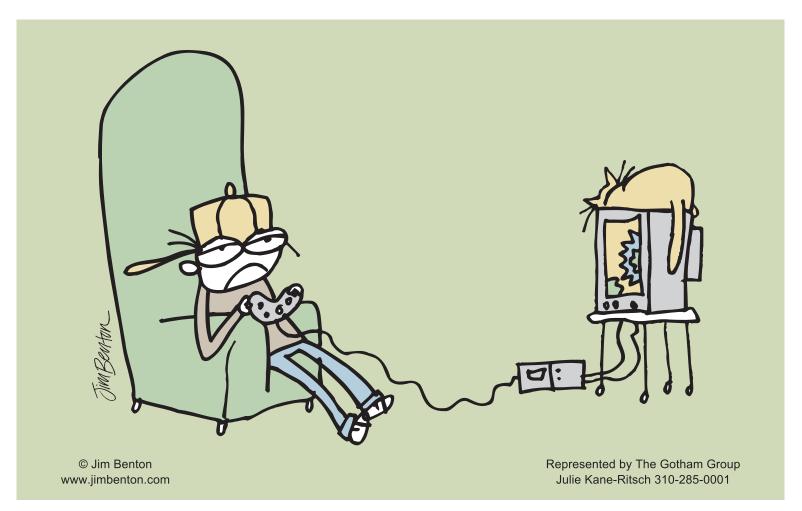
Cable network programming is still a growing platform in Germany, but Kastenmueller says it has a lot bubbling under the surface including mobile and IPTV. "We have many people and telecommunications networks knocking on our doors," he says. A deal with Deutsche Telecom will make Jetix programming available as on-demand in the coming months and the net will also appear in DT's channel package launching this month on IPTV. He hints the next step will likely be pursuing more downloadable platforms on-line. "Broadband is expanding rapidly in Germany," he says, adding broadband users now outnumber the country's 3.5-million subscribers.

In terms of programming, three new series are set to bow in the coming months. *Get Ed* joined the net in August. Kastenmueller says its humor plays into Jetix's core values and brand, and the long-awaited *Pucca* launches at the end of this month. "I'm personally excited by



this brand, from programming, consumer products, branding perspectives—it's got great potential." The show featuring the kickass lovelorn Pucca became a priority in Germany at the end of August, with marketing campaigns and on-air clips launching to get the kids ready. Beyond that, Jetix will focus on another major launch for early spring, as its window for co-pro *Oban Star Racers* starts. "I don't know if it's wrong to say it's an animated version of *Star Wars*, but it mixes epic with sci-fi," he says.

This year will also mark the sixth anniversary of the Jetix Kids Awards, but Kastenmueller says he's ramping up the momentum just in



case Nickelodeon decides to bring its Nick's Kids Choice Awards to Germany. This year, the show will have more categories including best singer and best toy, and will be broadcasted on free TV.

# Classic plans: EM.TV rolls out familiar fare such as Flipper & Lopaka

### EMITY GOES CLASSIC FOR PRESCHOOLERS

The diginet may have a smaller number of households in its reach (about 2.5 million compared to the approximately 33 million covered by the terrestrials), but EM.TV is stocking its sked with classic series to make both parents and kids happy.

Susanne Schosser, managing director at EM.TV, says she's anticipating the launch of *Flipper & Lopaka* most of all. Although it had its first run on ZDF, she thinks its stamina in Austria (where she says it beat *SpongeBob*) will help draw in view-

ers ages six through nine. "All of our hopes are with this series," she says. There's also *Finger Tips*, a make-and-do live-action series

that teaches viewers how to decorate their rooms, cook a meal and maintain a cool lifestyle.

As for preschool, she's

going with a raft of classics designed to tug at the nostalgic heartstrings of German parents. Because the school day

man parents. Because the school day commences so early in the country, the

preschool block airs from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. and then repeats from 10 a.m. to noon. Schosser anticipates a lot of viewers will tune in following a summer tour that promoted the 30th anniversary of the German classic *Maya the Bee*, which included landing a big booth at a popular theme park. **\( \)** 

### "Hard Times" continued from page 119

Keeping that in mind, she's on the lookout for comedyaction for the main channel, but warns it's difficult to make acquisitions for the network. Cartoon not only produces much of its programming in-house in the U.S., but there's also the new development unit in the U.K. that's set to get up and running in January. Not all is lost for indie producers, however, as CN did pick up Vancouver, Canada-based Nerd Corps' *Storm Hawks* recently and there's a lot of possibilities for preschool acquisitions at Cartoonito.

# BRaNDwidth: Jetix stretches beyond toon action for live shows like *Dark Oracle*

### JETEX EXPANDS ITS TARGET

Whereas last year the focus was on primetime and weekend blocks to target the older end of the boys' demo, this year is about pumping up the viewership across all blocks. Boel Ferguson, managing director at Jetix UK, is most interested in promoting Jetix UK's brand, which is stretching from its original dispatch of boy-centric action adventure to include live action, comedy and adventure. Consider *Pucca*, which she says has the action the boys expect with the cheeky humor girls will enjoy.



New programs launching in the upcoming season include Toronto, Canada-based Breakthrough's comedy toon *Captain Flamingo*, action-adventure *Team Galaxy* from Marathon, and of course, Jetix's latest co-production, *Oban Star Racers*.

Live action isn't new to the Jetix channel—after all, this is the home of the *Power Rangers*. But Ferguson is excited about adding *Dark Oracle* to her sked. It mixes comic book style 2-D toons with sci-fi inspired live action. "It shows we're about variation," she says. No





Olivia King Canter



**Peter Dougherty** 



**Olivier Gers** 



**Lionel Marty** 



Cynthia Money



**Robert Traub** 



**Anthony van Someren** 



Wes Wood

**ABC Enterprises** (Sydney, Australia, 61-028-333-1500): The commercial arm of the Australian pubcaster has appointed **Karen Dacy** manager program sales; she assumes the position recently resigned by Michael Badorrek. In her new role she will oversee the management of the program sales business including current affair sales, international distribution of the Film Australia and Opera Australia program catalogues as well as the extensive ABC Enterprises program catalogue.

**Amity Entertainment** (Nashville, Tennessee, 615-370-2510): **Jason Elsky** has been promoted from director of marketing to VP of marketing. In his new role, he'll be responsible for approving and overseeing all marketing, advertising, and public relations plans implemented by the company. Elsky will also oversee the department of station relations and coordinate marketing activities in the U.S. and Canada for flagship show *The Big Comfy Couch*.

**Emily Jones** has also just been hired as manager of station relations to help manage relationships with public television stations that air *The Big Comfy Couch* and other Amity properties.

**Blueprint Entertainment** (Toronto, Canada, 416-531-8585): **Brenda Greenburg** is the new VP of creative affairs, based in the company's Toronto offices. She will oversee production of *The Best Years*, a new hour-long series produced for The N and Global about first-year students at a fictional Boston university starting this fall. Greenburg has worked as executive producer, producer and story editor on several series in her 25-year career, including *As the World Turns*, *Street Legal*, *Side Effects* and *North/South*.

**Buena Vista Worldwide Home Entertainment** (Burbank, California, 818-295-4841): As part of its global reorganization, Buena Vista Worldwide Home Entertainment—the result of integrating Buena Vista Home Entertainment and Buena Vista Home Entertainment International—has appointed a new executive team. President **Bob Chapek** will lead the division along with **Pat Fitzgerald**, executive VP of worldwide sales, distribution and trade marketing. Fitzgerald also leads the division's efforts towards developing technology in support of new models of digital content distribution, including next-gen formats.

**Gordon Ho**, executive VP of worldwide marketing, creative content and business development, will oversee all marketing and product

management functions for the division including brand marketing, promotions, public relations and on-line marketing for the company's home entertainment product. As well, he'll helm acquisitions, product, new technology, brand/franchise and business development.

**Lori MacPherson**, previously senior VP of brand marketing and product management, is now general manager of North American operations and will work on sales, marketing and distribution of home entertainment products for the continent. **Daniel Solnicki** steps into the role of general manager for Asia Pacific & Latin America where he'll manage all self-distributed and licensed markets in each region. Similarly, **Julie Sneddon** becomes general manager for Europe, Middle East and Africa.

**Cartoon Network** (Atlanta, Georgia, 404-885-2263): Cartoon Network has hired **Peter Dougherty** in the newly created position of senior VP of branding. Dougherty will be responsible for the creative execution and communication of the Cartoon Network brand and its multiple properties to target audiences in the U.S. His new remit includes the network's on-air environment and franchise presentations; in-house creative services responsible for print, electronic and outdoor advertising; execution of sponsored promotions; and creative development for Cartoon Network Enterprises' licensing business. He comes to the company after an 11-year tenure at MTV Europe.

**Cosgrove Hall Films** (Manchester, England, 44-161-882-2500): **Wes Wood** is taking on the role of development producer. After studying animation and illustration at Manchester Metropolitan University, the 26-year-old has worked in the production side of animation both free-lance and more recently for puppetmakers MacKinnon & Saunders. The company is looking for co-pros and opps to own IP and expects Wood will help it move forward in the national and international markets.

**Disney Channel and Jetix** (Burbank, California, 818-569-7500): **David Levine** has been promoted to VP of worldwide programming strategy and windowing. Levine will oversee all aspects of the worldwide programming strategy group, including facilitating communication between Disney and Jetix Channels to co-ordinate and roll out programming strategies on a global basis. Since joining Disney in March 2004, he has served as executive director, programming strategy, Toon Disney

and Jetix. Prior to his position at Disney, Levine was VP, business affairs and development for Ragdoll USA.

**Entara** (London, England, 44-207-580-3009): **Regis Brown** has hopped over from Taffy Entertainment to head up Entara's new in-house distribution division and lead the company's strategic growth in worldwide distribution, co-production and acquisitions. He will focus on building and managing Entara's proprietary film and TV animation entertainment business. Prior to his tenure at Taffy, he spent six years with Film Roman.

**Entertainment Rights** (London, England, 44-208-762-6200): **Olivia King Canter** has been appointed director of sales for Latin America and Canada. Canter will be responsible for driving ER's business in these key territories and will work from the company's New York office. Prior to joining ER, she was director of the Havana Music Company, senior VP of international television at WarnerVision and VP of international programming sales at MTV Networks.

**Exodus Film Group** (Venice, California, 310-392-7778): **Delbert A. Whetter** has been promoted to CEO from his former post as senior VP of business affairs, in which he was responsible for drafting, negotiating, and implementing numerous film and television property transactions, film financing arrangements, and IP licenses. In addition to directing the operating activities of Exodus, he will continue to oversee all aspects of business affairs.

**FremantleMedia** (London, England, 44-207-691-6000): **Olivier Gers** is now general manager of licensing worldwide. Based in New York, Gers will oversee the exploitation of the company's brands off screen and around the world including brand licensing, music publishing, online and interactive, sponsorship, live events and wireless. Gers will also work with CEO David Ellender to develop and implement the company's ancillary rights strategic direction within the newly created FremantleMedia Enterprises Group.

**Navarre Corporation** (Minneapolis, Minnesota, 763-535-8333): In a move the company expects to be a major growth opportunity, Navarre has brought in **Marvin Gleicher** to be VP of DVD content acquisition. He will be responsible for acquiring and marketing DVD entertainment content for the company's distribution arm. Gleicher says his immediate goals include looking for a wide range of content that Navarre can sell and distribute in the sell-through and digital distribution arenas. He adds that kids content from several different countries—animation in particular—will make up a large part of the acquisitions. Prior to joining Navarre, Gleicher founded the North America division of Manga Entertainment, which specialized in marketing Japanese animation and continued to serve as president after it was bought by IDT Entertainment in 2004.

**NBDtv** (London, England, 44-207-243-3646): NBDtv, an international television distribution company, has several new hires to manage its enlarged programming portfolio following last year's acquisition by DCD Media. **Danielle Davies**, formerly sales manager at 3DD, heads the newly created Southern and Eastern hemisphere sales department, where she will focus on sales in the Middle East, Far East, Latin America, Canada, and Australasia. **Rick Barker**, formerly head of television sales at Digital Classics Distribution, will take on head of sales, Continental Europe.

Reporting to Barker as sales executive is **Lauren Marriott**, who previously spent two years at Zone Vision's distribution arm selling to Eastern Europe. **Katie Young**, previously a producer for Eardrum takes on the role of technical manager.

**Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products** (New York, NY, 212-258-6000): Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products has upped **Robert Traub** to senior VP, retail development. In his new expanded role, Traub has been charged with building NVCP's international retail relationships and maximizing worldwide product presence for Nick Jr., Nickelodeon Movies, Paramount Pictures, Comedy Central, MTVN International and Spike TV licensed properties. He will also continue to manage his retail staff in New York with recently opened satellite offices in Bentonville, Arkansas and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

**Sesame Workshop** (New York, New York, 212-595-3456): Sesame Workshop has promoted **Celia Schneiderman** to manager, international television distribution. As such, her responsibilities will include program sales in Asia, Latin America, Canada, the Caribbean, and in-flight. She recently held the post of international television distributor coordinator and oversaw details of the Workshop's participation at international television trade shows and liaised with broadcasters.

**Small World Toys** (Culver City, California, 310-645-9680): **Karla llarde**, former director of marketing at Small World Toys has been promoted to director of specialty sales and marketing, assuming the position of **Terri Maccarrone**, who is leaving the company. Ilarde will report to **Howard Bennett**, senior VP of sales. She has more than 10 years experience in marketing, advertising, and communications in the retail, manufacturing and e-commerce markets. Her former positions include director of marketing for simplyfamily.com, director of marketing for Cloud 9 Interactive children's products and marketing manager for The Walt Disney Company's Interactive group.

**Taffy Entertainment** (Woodland Hills, California, 818-999-0062): **Lionel Marty** is moving up to president of worldwide distribution at Taffy Entertainment, which manages MoonScoop and Mike Young Productions (MYP) brands. The newly created position sees Marty heading television and video sales for Taffy Entertainment's library of kids' programming including the MYP-produced *Jakers!* And MoonScoop's *Code Lyoko*. **Cynthia Money** has also joined the Taffy team in L.A. as president of worldwide consumer products with a remit to build consumer awareness and marketing platforms for the company's brands. Money was formerly VP at VIZ Media in San Francisco. Also, **Mevelyn Noriega** has been promoted to senior VP sales administration, while **Marie Conge** at the Paris office, has been promoted to senior VP of international sales.

**Turner Broadcasting Systems UK** (London, England, 0207-693-1000): **Anthony van Someren** has joined as VP of creative and production of Cartoon Network, Boomerang, Toonami and Cartoon Network Too, UK. The newly created role, following a restructure in May, is one of three new VP positions. van Someren will be responsible for developing and championing the creative vision across all platforms at all of Turner's UK kids' channels. He previously worked at Flextech Television where he was creative director across Trouble, Challenge, Bravo and Player channels, with responsibility for creative execution across the board.



# How to reach some of the key companies in this issue

**ABC Australia** 

Sydney, Australia 61-2-9950-3512 www.abc.net.au

AOL

Dulles, Virgina 703-448-8700 www.aol.com

**Animax** 

Seoul, South Korea 82-1-705-5005 www.animax-asia.com

**BET Networks** 

Washington, D.C. 202-533-1990 www.bet.com

**Big Tent Entertainment** 

New York, New York 212-604-0064 www.bigtent.tv

CBBC

London, England 44-207-743-8000 www.bbc.com

**CBC International Sales Division** 

Toronto, Canada 416-205-3311 www.cbc.ca

**Cartoon Network** 

Atlanta, Georgia 404-885-2263 www.cartoonnetwork.com

**Cartoon Network UK** 

London, England 44-207-693-1000 www.cartoonnetwork.co.uk

**CiTV** 

London, England 44-207-843-8000

**Cookie Jar Entertainment** 

Toronto, Canada 416-977-3238 www.thecookiejarcompany.com

**Corus Entertainment** 

Toronto, Canada 416-642-3770 www.corusent.com

**Cosgrove Hall Films** 

Manchester, England 44-161-882-2500 www.chf.co.uk

Cranium

Seattle, Washington 206-832-4818 www.cranium.com

**Cuppa Coffee Animation** 

Toronto, Canada 416-340-8869 www.cuppacoffee.com

**DIC Entertainment** 

Burbank, California 818-955-5400 www.dicentertainment.com

**Digital Outlook** 

London, England 44-208-989-8220 www.digital-outlook.com

**Eat Your Lunch** 

Le Grange, Illinois 773-263-5380 www.eatyourlunch.com

**Entertainment Rights** 

London, England 44-208-762-6200 www.entertainmentrights.co.uk

Five

London, England 44-207-5550-5555 www.five.tv

**HIT Entertainment** 

London, England 44-207-554-2500 www.hitentertainment.com

**Jetix Europe** 

London, England 44-208-222-3600 www.jetix.net

**JK Benton Design Studio** 

Bloomfield, Michigan 248-644-5875 www.jimbenton.com

Ki.Ka

Erfurt, Germany 49-36-1218-1801 www.kika.de

**Manhattan Toy** 

Minneapolis, Minnesota 612-337-9600 www.manhattantoy.com

Marathon

Paris, France 33-1-5335-9090 www.marathon.fr

**MarVista Entertainment** 

Los Angeles, California 310-737-0950 www.marvista.net

**MGA Entertainment** 

Los Angeles, California 323-966-5771 www.mgae.com

**MGM Consumer Products** 

Santa Monica, California 310-449-3000 www.mgm.com

**Nerd Corps** 

Vancouver, Canada 604-484-0266 www.nerdcorps.com **Nickelodeon Germany** 

Berlin, Germany 49-30-700-1000 www.nick.de

Nickelodeon UK

London, England 44-207-462-1011

**Novel Entertainment** 

London, England 44-207-462-1011 www.novelentertainment.co.uk

**Porchlight Entertainment** 

Los Angeles, California 310-477-8400 www.porchlight.com

**Rainbow** 

Loreto, Italy 39-06-322-0513 www.rbw.it

**ReelTime Rentals** 

Seattle, Washington 206-219-6863 www.reeltime.com

**Sesame Workshop** 

New York, New York 212-595-3456 www.sesameworkshop.org

**Sinking Ship** 

Toronto, Canada 416-533-8172 www.sinkingship.ca

SuperRTL

Cologne, Germany 49-22-191-550 www.superrtl.de

**Team Baby Entertainment** 

Houston, Texas 713-796-0900 www.teambabyentertainment.com

Teletoon

Toronto, Canada 416-956-2030 www.teletoon.com

**TV-Loonland** 

Munich, Germany 49-89-205-080 www.loonland.com

**United Media** 

New York, New York 212-293-8500 www.unitedmedia.com.

**Warner Bros. Consumer Products** 

Burbank, California 818-954-7890 www.warnerbros.com

**Xilam Animation** 

Paris, France 33-140-187-101 www.xilam.com



### Catch new opportunities as they arise

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## Calendar of Events

Brand Licensing London	Oct. 4-5	London, England	44-208-987-0970	www.brandlicensingexpo.com	Licensing
Frankfurt Book Fair	Oct. 4-8	Frankfurt, Germany	49-69-210-2256	www.frankfurt-book-fair.com	Publishing
MIPCOM Jr	Oct. 7-8	Cannes, France	33-1-41-90-4400	www.mipcomjunior.com	TV/Prod/Prog
MIPCOM	Oct. 9-13	Cannes, France	31-1-41-90-4400	www.mipcom.com	TV/Prod/Prog
promo.live	Oct. 10-12	Chicago, IL	203-358-3751	www.promoexpo.com	Promo/Mktg
Shanghai Toy Expo	Oct. 18-20	Shanghai, China	8610-6603-3782	www.shanghaitoyexpo.com	Toys
Licensing Asia	Oct. 18-20	Tokyo, Japan	81-3-6812-8695	www.licensing-asia.jp	Licensing
Shanghai International Licensing Show	Oct. 19-22	Shanghai, China	8621-6217-7777	www.chinalicenseshow.com	Licensing
Chicago International Children's Film Festival	Oct. 19-29	Chicago, IL	773-281-9075	www.cicff.org	Film
American International Fall Toy Show	Oct. 20-23	New York, NY	212-675-1141	www.toy-tia.org/fts	Toys/Games
SGMA Fall Event	Oct. 22-24	New York, NY	202-775-1762	www.sgma.com	Sports/Apparel
Sportel Monaco	Oct. 24-27	Monte Carlo, Monaco	201-869-4022 (U.S.)	www.sportelmonaco.com	Prod/Dist
Licensing Market (LIMA) 2006	Oct. 25	Munich, Germany	212-244-1944	www.licensing.org	Licensing
Cartoon Feature	Oct. 26-28	Potsdam, Germany	32-2-242-9343 (Belgium)	www.cartoon-media.be	Animation
Seoul International Toy Fair	Oct. 26-29	Seoul, Korea	822-795-9505	www.sitoy.or.kr	Toys/Games
L.A. Office Roadshow Europe	Nov. 1-2	London, England	310-275-2088	www.laoffice.com	Promotions
American Film Market	Nov. 2-9	Los Angeles, CA	310-446-1000	www.ifta-online.org	Film
LILA	Nov. 6-7	Puerto Vallarta, Mexico	212-627-5828	www.licensinginlatinamerica.com	Licensing
Spain TV Expo	Nov. 7-9	Miami, FL	305-446-4387	www.icex.es	TV/prod/prog
EPM Marketing	Nov. 13-14	Los Angeles, CA	212-941-0099	www.epmcom.com	marketing
The Chicago International Toy and Game Fair	Nov. 17-19	Chicago, IL	847-677-8277	www.chitag.com	Toys/Games
International Halloween Show	Dec. 4-7	New York, NY	212-675-1141	www.toy-tia.org	App/Lic/Merch
Youth Power	Dec. 5-6	San Diego, CA	800-882-8684	www.kidpower.com	Marketing
Consumer Electronics Show	Jan. 8-11, 2007	Las Vegas, NV	703-907-7605	www.cedweb.org	Elec/Toys/Game
Hong Kong Toys & Games	Jan. 8-11	Hong Kong	852-2240-4435	www.hktoyfair.com	Toys/Games
National Retail Federation Convention & Expo	Jan. 14-17	New York, NY	202-783-7971	www.nrf.com	Mfg/Dist
KidScreen Summit	Feb. 7-9	New York, NY	416-408-2300	www.kidscreensummit.com	Prod/Prog/Lic
American International Toy Fair	Feb. 11-14	New York, NY	212-675-1141	www.toy-tia.org	Toys/Games
National Halloween Toy & Party Show	Feb. 23-26	Rosemont, IL	800-323-5462	www.transworldexhibits.com	App/Lic/Merch
London Book Fair	Mar. 5-7	London, England	44-208-271-2124	www.londonbookfair.co.uk	Publishing
Game Developers Conference	Mar. 5-9	San Fransisco, CA	415-947-6000	www.gdconf.com	Inter/Games
MIPTV	Apr. 16-20	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.miptv.com	TV/Prod/Prog
MILIA	Apr. 16-20	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.milia.com	Inter/MM
Bologna Children's Bookfair	Apr. 24-27	Bologna, Italy	39-051-282-111	www.bolognafiere.it	Publishing
Licensing 2007 International	June 19-21	New York, NY	203-882-1300	www.licensingshow.com	Licensing
SIGGRAPH 2007	Aug. 5-9	San Diego, CA	312-321-6830	www.siggraph.org	Inter/Anim/MM

**Industry Legend** 

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### November 30 and December 1st 2006, Montreal, Quebec

Conference and workshops on innovation in Children and Youth Television Screenings of the best programs from Munich's Prix jeunesse 2006



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## COOLWATCH

## What is your favorite fun food to share with a friend?

### Boys 8 to 11 (206 kids)

chips	20.4%
candy	13.1%
pizza	13.1%
popcorn	9.2%
french fries	3.9%
cookies	2.9%

### Girls 8 to 11 (240 kids)

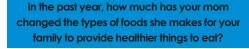
candy	14.2%
pizza	12.1%
chips	10.4%
popcorn	6.7%
cookies	5.4%
aummy fruit snacks	5.4%

### Boys 12 to 15 (186 kids)

chips	18.3%
pizza	16.7%
candy	11.8%
popcorn	9.7%
Skittles	3.2%
cake/brownies	2.7%

### Girls 12 to 15 (219 kids)

chips	22.4%
popcorn	11.4%
candy	9.6%
pizza	8.2%
ice cream	7.8%
cookies	4.1%



### Boys 8 to 11 (287 kids)

a little	52.3%
a lot	29.6%
not at all	18.1%

### Girls 8 to 11 (306 kids)

a little	50.7%
a lot	33.3%
not at all	16.0%

Popcorn, pizza and candy kid fun staples



a little	48.9%
not at all	29.7%
a lot	21.4%

### Girls 12 to 15 (253 kids)

a little	50.2%
a lot	28.1%
not at all	21.7%



Research tidbits found in this feature are extracted from the September issue of KidSay's Trend Tracker, a syndicated study published five times a year that breaks down what's cool and what's not according to 1,000 American kids aged eight to 15. KidSay, an 11-year-old full-service kids market research firm, works with schools and youth organizations in hundreds of U.S. cities to collect and analyze data about trends emerging in the categories of entertainment, famous people/characters, internet, food/beverage, spending, toys and lifestyle. If you'd like more information about Trend Tracker, please contact Bob Reynolds by phone (866-273-8555/913-390-8110) or by e-mail (bob@kidsay.com).



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Rainbow S.p.A. www.rbw.it

### 1IPCOM Booth R33.01